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LONDON: CHATTO & WINDUS, 111 ST MARTIN' LANE, W.C.

# LONDON MEMORIES

SOCIAL, HISTORICAL, AND  
TOPOGRAPHICAL

BY

CHARLES WILLIAM HECKETHORN

AUTHOR OF

'LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS,' 'LONDON SOUVENIRS,' ETC.



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## PREFACE

THE writer of a novel may indulge in as much romancing and inventing as his genius enables him to, and he may therefore be as original as he pleases. But the historian has no such licence ; he must take facts and scenes, and the actors in them, as the chronicler hands them down to him. He has the chessboard and the men, and all he can do with them is to place them in positions they have not occupied before ; his originality cannot go beyond arrangement. His clever moves are restricted to occasionally correcting an error, supplying a deficiency, or throwing a ray of light into an obscure corner. Hence, the adept in history and topography cannot expect in the following pages much that is unknown to him ; but the general reader will, it is hoped, be helped by the author having collected in separate pictures, incidents, characters, and topographical aspects of a kindred nature, at present scattered in confusing medley through many general

and special works, and may therefrom derive both information and amusement. That I have selected and pieced together into mosaic pictures the data derived from hundreds of books, documents, old and recent newspapers, and other publications, and from personal local inquiries, is a merit I may fairly claim for this work.

C. W. HECKETHORN.

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# LONDON MEMORIES

## I.

### VICISSITUDES OF LONDON HOUSES AND LOCALITIES.

TIME is ever working the most miraculous changes; now it elevates, now it degrades—more frequently the latter. Now the noble dust of Cæsar forms the bung to close a beer-barrel; now a pair of tattered breeches becomes the standard of a conquering army. This now ennobling, now vilifying process is peculiarly noticeable in buildings; sometimes Time does neither to them, it simply destroys them almost as soon as they are erected. Lord Clarendon's magnificent palace in Piccadilly, the building of which began in 1664, was totally demolished less than twenty years after (in 1683), not a vestige of it being left. In 1873, a well-known financier erected an Italian palace in Kensington. The cost of the building and the grounds exceeded one million pounds. The mansion contained a grand hall and staircase, built entirely of white marble, drawing-rooms, library, picture-gallery, three dining-rooms *en suite*, and a spacious ball-room.

For the formation of the grounds, which were twelve acres in extent, the owner purchased an Irish colony situate in the rear of Kensington High Street, formerly called the Rookery, which he demolished, converting the ground into a picturesque lake, with two small islands in the centre. But he got into difficulties, and after various efforts to secure a sale, the mansion was sold piecemeal as so much old material, and finally pulled down in 1883, the owner never having occupied it.

In the reign of Edward I. (1272-1307), and for centuries after, there stood near the Wallbrook a building known as the Tower Royal, which in the reign of Richard II. (1377-1399) came to be called the Queen's Wardrobe. It was a royal residence, and strongly fortified, but in course of time it was neglected, and first became stables for the King's horses, and in Stow's time was divided into tenements and let out to anyone who chose to live therein. The name now only survives in the short street called Tower Royal, connecting Watling Street with Cannon Street.

'A right fair and stately house,' as Stow says, called Cold Harbrough, in Dowgate, which had numbered among its tenants a Bishop of Durham, and the Earls of Hereford, Huntingdon, Cambridge, and Shrewsbury, was taken down by the last-named, who on its site erected a number of small tenements, which were let out at high rents to people of all sorts. Building speculations are evidently not a new invention. In the same neighbourhood was a college of priests, called Jesus' Commons, 'a house well furnished with brass, pewter, napery, plate, a fair library, all which was of old time given to a number of priests that should keep



commons there, and as one left by death or otherwise, another should be admitted into his room ; but this order . . . being discontinued (at the Reformation and suppression of religious houses) the said house was turned into tenements.' In Petticoat Lane there stood, as lately as the reign of James I., the stately mansion of Count Gondamar, the Spanish Ambassador ; eventually it was let out in tenements, and its gardens covered with mean cottages and sheds, and its once magnificent apartments inhabited by a colony of Jew pedlars and beggars.

The portion of the Templars' Priory at Hackney which remained standing far into this century, and was known as Shore Place, was divided into small tenements, and inhabited by sweeps and others of kindred callings.

Houses belonging to the Earl of Worcester and to the Percy family were in a similar fashion divided into tenements, as fashion, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, began to set in a westward direction. Till then there does not appear to have been any marked division of London into fashionable and unfashionable districts. Houses of the nobility, of merchant princes, of men distinguished in every branch of the public service, were found in Thames Street, in all the narrow lanes leading down to the Thames, in Fish Street Hill, in Bishopsgate Street ; but east of the latter seems even then to have been unfashionable, though religious houses of great extent and wealth could be found there—where, in fact, in those days were they not to be found ? The City itself was full of great houses, but during Queen Elizabeth's reign the courtiers began erecting their mansions along the river-bank farther west, from Temple Bar along the Strand to Westminster. Some had already been built

at an earlier date. For a considerable time only the south side of the Strand, with its gardens down to the Thames, was occupied by dwellings, and the houses which gradually sprang up on the north side were at first only mean structures; and the pavement of the roadway being execrable, or totally absent, the street was comparatively deserted—the Strand traffic of the present day was then not dreamt of.

And fashion, when it did forsake the City, advanced but timidly and by slow and short steps. At first it advanced no farther than Shire Lane, a narrow, crooked, dirty street just outside Temple Bar. Here the Kit-Kat Club, the great club of Queen Anne's reign, comprising among its members men of the highest rank and reputation, established itself in the house of a pastry-cook. Among the Kit-Kat Dukes were the great Marlborough and the Duke of Kingston; among the Earls, Dorset, the patron of Dryden and Prior; among the Lords, Halifax; among the Baronets, Sir Robert Walpole. Among the poets and wits were Congreve and Vanbrugh; Sir Godfrey Kneller, the Court painter, was a member; Addison and Steele belonged to it. Then fashion crept a little more westward, and settled—where? Around the purlieus of Clare Market and Drury Lane! There Lord Craven had a beautiful mansion; there, close to Cradle Alley, Arthur Annesley, Earl of Anglesey, and Lord Privy Seal under Charles II., had his town-house. In Clare Street the Earl of Clare had a princely mansion, adjoining Craven House. The Artists' Club, of which Hogarth was a member, used to meet at the Bull's Head tavern in Clare Market. In Vere Street, another of the very low streets of this

locality, lived Sir Thomas Lyttelton and the poet Ogilby.

Fashion then patronized Bow Street, which in the days of Dryden (born 1631, died 1700) was considered the most aristocratic street of London. This Bow Street, the mention of which in our day reminds us only of the chief police-court of the Metropolis, was then what Bond Street and Regent Street are now, the walk or lounge of the exquisites and fine gentlemen-about-town. But not only was it the lounge, it also was the residence of many of them. The poet Edmund Waller lived in this street; so did the witty Earl of Dorset. Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, was born in this street; Grinling Gibbons lived here in a house called the King's Arms; Sir Godfrey Kneller and Dr. Radcliffe, and the poet Wycherley with his wife, the widow of the Earl of Drogheda, also were inhabitants of Bow Street. The street, being near to various theatres, was much patronized by actors. Michael Mohun lived in it, so did Robert Wilks and Spranger Barry, actors, and Henry Fielding, the novelist and police magistrate—a famous list for so short a street, now one of the dullest in London. When fashion left it, Bow Street became known for its taverns, where Bohemianism held its revels.

Those members of the aristocratic and fashionable world who liked more open quarters had about that time travelled as far as the then almost new Lincoln's Inn Fields mansions, which had been planned and partly erected by Inigo Jones; and the names of the noble, famous, and distinguished personages who at various times lived in this square constitute a very long list,

comprising the Earls of Lindsey, afterwards Dukes of Ancaster; the Duke of Newcastle; the great Lord Somers; Lord Northington; the Earls of Bristol and Sandwich; Lords Kenyon and Erskine; Sir John Soane, and Mr. Spencer Perceval. These are but a few of the celebrities who once were content to live in this neighbourhood.

The district of Bloomsbury was at one time a fashionable retreat. Bloomsbury Square was at first called Southampton Square; Southampton House, a noble mansion, formed the north side of it. It was afterwards called Bedford House. Montague House was another fine mansion; it eventually became the British Museum, or, more correctly speaking, this national institution was built on the site of the house and gardens belonging to it. In 1763, Baltimore House was erected on part of the ground which afterwards became Russell Square. The mansion was so large that it was eventually divided into two separate dwellings, each of which is even now larger than the ordinary run of town-houses. Russell Square aimed at being fashionable, but Mr. Croker's inquiry in the House of Commons, 'But where *is* Russell Square?' knocked that pretension on the head.

But as royalty kept moving westward—from the most eastern point of the City, the Tower, it had under Henry VI. advanced to Baynard's Castle, and under Henry VIII. to Bridewell—first a palace and then a prison, not for persons of rank, but for petty pilferers, rogues, and vagrants—and as the royal migration continued to Whitehall, so the movement of the aristocratic followers of the Court naturally took the same direction;

the courtly travelling-stage, with its proscenium turned to the west, moved in a compact body towards Soho Square and Spring Gardens. Between the two points is Leicester Square, which took its name from Leicester House, the town residence of the Sydneys, Earls of Leicester. It stood on the north side of the square, and was at one time inhabited by Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, the daughter of James I. She died there in 1661. George II., when he quarrelled with his father, retired to this house, and Frederick, Prince of Wales, his son, did the same; wherefore Pennant called Leicester House the ‘pouting place of princes.’ George III., when Prince of Wales, resided occasionally with his mother at Leicester House. The house was afterwards used for the exhibition of Sir Ashton Lever’s museum of objects of natural history. Miss Linwood’s gallery of pictures in needlework was shown in the adjoining Saville House, which latter had been inhabited jointly with Leicester House by the above-named Frederick, Prince of Wales. This latter house was, in fact, the home of a constant succession of other shows, theatrical, conjuring, panoramic; it was then turned into a *café chantant*, till in 1865, in consequence of a gas explosion, it was burnt down to the ground. Within the memory of most readers is the disgraceful condition to which the square was reduced when Baron Grant, in 1874, purchased the central piece of ground, adorned it with a fountain, statues, turf, shrubs, and flower-beds, and a handsome iron railing, and transferred the garden to the Metropolitan Board of Works.

The streets all round this locality abound in noble reminiscences: the names of a Hogarth, a Dryden, a

Reynolds, a Burke, a Newton are connected with them. What is there in them now? Variety theatres, music-halls, and bogus clubs. The change is scarcely creditable to the present generation.

Soho Square has its glorious memories. What remains of them?—the memory thereof. All that is left standing of the noble mansions which once were numerous in the square and its environs is now dedicated to trade or given up to a poor and squalid population. *Sic transit gloria mundi*. The Streater junior, whose town mansion in 1711 was in Gerrard Street, Soho, whilst his country house was near Bolton Row, in Piccadilly, together with all the other gentry who dwelt in that locality, went farther west, towards St. James's,—for, according to a natural law, all progress is westward; even the course of commercial advance is in that direction. The great emporiums of trade at first were in the East, in India, then in Persia, then in the Levant, then in the Adriatic, then in Genoa, then in Augsburg, Frankfurt, Hamburgh, Holland, then in London, then in Liverpool, whence the trade activity spread to New York, and thence to Chicago, and finally to San Francisco, whence it will travel to Japan and China, and thus complete the circuit.

The site of St. James's Palace has undergone strange vicissitudes; where now stands a royal palace there originally stood a hospital dedicated to St. James the Less, for fourteen leprous women, founded before the Norman invasion. It was rebuilt in the reign of Henry III. (1216-1272), and greatly enriched by successive donations from the citizens of London. Edward I. granted the inmates the privileges and profits of a fair,



to be kept on the eve of St. James (May 1), the day and the morrow and four days following ; and this was the origin of the once famous May Fair, held in the fields near Piccadilly. When Henry VIII. suppressed the religious houses, St. James's Hospital was included in the suppression ; the King expelled the sisters—allowing them, however, pensions during their lives—pulled down the hospital, and built in its place a palace, which retained the name. It stood in the midst of fields, now the Park ; but the gateway facing St. James's Street, the Chapel Royal, and the chimney-piece of the old presence-chamber are now all that remains of the palace built by Henry VIII. This gatehouse and the chapel cover the site of the ancient hospital. In 1838, on taking down parts of the Chapel Royal, some remains of the masonry of the hospital were laid bare. What a sight it must have been when the bloodthirsty King went forth, as Miss Benger tells us in the 'Life of Anne Boleyn,' early on a May morning, attended by a train of courtiers, gaily attired in white and silver, to make his way into the woods of Kensington and Hampstead to bring back the fragrant May boughs ! Well, Robespierre was a great lover of flowers, and so the tigerish grimalkin, it seems, had his purring moments. It is strange for a hospital to be turned into a palace, but the reverse may take place, an instance of which we have in the palace of Greenwich. Charles II., in building the first wing of it, intended the structure, when finished, to replace the old palace which had occupied the site, but he did not live to finish it ; and William III., who had the interests of the navy much at heart, devoted the building, which was completed during his reign, to a

nobler use, viz., to be a retreat for the sailors who had been disabled in the service of their country.

One of the greatest changes in the aspect of London streets has taken place round Hyde Park Corner. This locality, now covered by many noble mansions, such as Apsley House, the mansion of Lord Rothschild, Hamilton Place, and others, was 150 years ago one of the most wretched in London, swarming with low public-houses ; there were no fewer than ten all clustered together on the spot. They were chiefly resorted to by soldiers, particularly on review days, when there were long wooden seats fixed in the streets for the accommodation of six or seven barbers, who were employed on field-days in powdering those youths who were not adroit enough to dress each other. And it was not unusual for twenty or thirty of the elder soldiers to bestride a form in the open air, where each combed, soaped, powdered, and tied the hair of his comrade, afterwards to undergo the same operation himself. In those days of pigtails and thirty-button gaiters, the dress and toilet of the soldier was something to marvel at. Tommy Atkins, though still too much under the rule of martinets and military tailors, has something to be thankful for, for living in the present century. An officer may still tell him that if he wants to grow a beard he must do so when he is off duty, but must be shaved when he is on duty ; but he has, at least, not to wear a pigtail.

The changes which building operations have produced in the value of land in London are strikingly demonstrated in the history of the site of Apsley House. Part of the spot where it stands was once occupied by

an apple-stall, the story of which has often been told, but, being apposite to our subject, may here be repeated. George II., when taking his usual morning ride, met an old soldier, and entering into conversation with him, learnt that he made his living by selling apples in a small hut. 'What can I do for you?' asked the King. 'Please, your Majesty, to give me a grant of the bit of ground my hut stands on, and I shall be happy.' 'Be happy,' replied the King, and had the grant made out. Years rolled on; the old soldier died and left a son, who became a respectable attorney. The then Chancellor gave a lease of the ground to a nobleman, as the apple-stall had fallen down, and the ground was supposed to belong to the Crown. But the young attorney put in his claim; a small sum was offered as a compromise and refused, and finally the sum of £450 per annum, ground-rent, was settled upon. In 1784 Allen's son sold the ground to Henry, Lord Apsley, who gave the house he built on it the name it is still known by.

A spot which has undergone great changes is Charing Cross. Without going back to the days when a hermitage occupied the site of the statue of Charles I., we will confine ourselves to the alterations the present century has seen. Where now the wide expanse of Trafalgar Square meets the eye, and all round St. Martin's Church, there was a perfect labyrinth of courts and alleys, including places known as the Bermudas, Cribbe Island, and Porridge Island, noted for its cookshops; from the Golden Cross to Cockspur Street a line of wretched-looking houses extended in a convex curve, and behind them, on what is now the site of the National Gallery, stood the Royal Mews; so that Charing Cross, from

the Strand to Cockspur Street, formed but a narrow thoroughfare. About the year 1830 the demolition of those old houses and the laying out of Trafalgar Square were commenced. From 1840-1843 the Nelson Column was in process of construction, the slowness of which gave *Punch* various occasions for making fun of the undertaking. To realize the difference between Charing Cross before 1830 and Charing Cross of the present day the maps and views of the two periods must be consulted.

To return to the vicissitudes certain buildings have undergone, let us take Crosby Hall. It was originally called Crosby Place, and built by Sir John Crosby, grocer and woolman, about 1470. It was one of the finest specimens of domestic architecture of the Perpendicular period. After Sir John's death in 1475, his widow parted with the mansion to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, who there held his Court till he left it in 1483 for his palace at Westminster. In 1502 Sir Bartholomew Reed, Lord Mayor of London, there entertained the Princess Katherine of Arragon two days before her marriage with Prince Arthur. The house was afterwards occupied in 1516 by Sir John Rest, Lord Mayor, and after that date till 1523 by Sir Thomas More, who in the latter year sold it to Antonio Bonvici, a merchant of Lucca, who left it to Germaine Cyoll, who had married a cousin of Sir Thomas Gresham. In 1566 Alderman Bond purchased the house for £1,500, from whose sons it was bought for £2,560 by Sir John Spencer, who kept his mayoralty there in 1594. The house was afterwards tenanted for a time by the Dowager Countess of Pembroke, 'Sydney's sister, Pem-

broke's mother.' On the death of Sir John the house descended to his son-in-law, Lord Compton, afterwards Earl of Northampton, whose son was killed fighting for Charles I. in 1642. From that time the house commenced its downward descent. It first became a temporary prison for 'malignants,' afterwards a Presbyterian chapel. The withdrawing-room and throne-room were let as warehouses to the East India Company. It was then taken by a packer, and much damaged. In 1831 the premises were advertised to be let upon a building lease. Thanks to the exertions of Miss Hackett, who lived near it, this almost unique example of domestic Gothic architecture was preserved, and in 1836 restored by public subscription. From 1842 to 1860 Crosby Hall was occupied by a literary and scientific institute. And what is this house, with so many historic associations—what is it now? A restaurant, where City clerks eat chops and steaks, and drink ale out of pewter pots—it has arrived at the bunghole stage!

Another good building gone wrong is the Panopticon. It was opened in 1853 as a place of popular instruction, somewhat after the plan of the Polytechnic; it was filled with scientific apparatus, and lectures on scientific subjects were delivered in the building. But the public care nothing for science—the Crystal Palace has proved this on a larger scale—the Panopticon failed to draw, and the company which had built it collapsed. The building remained for some time unoccupied, but was eventually reopened as a music-hall, which became famous for its ballets. It is now called the Palace of Varieties. An appeal to popular mental understanding,

as a rule, is unsuccessful; but a display of physical understandings always meets with thousands of enthusiastic followers and admirers.

When we find the former abodes of rank and wealth, of intellect and genius, invaded by the poor and lowly, by the ignorant and thoughtless, the change seems a subject for regret; but it is not always—in fact, scarcely ever—so; for but too often rank and wealth were debased to vile purposes, and the intellect and genius of the past were but misleading *ignes fatui*. It is a gain rather than a loss to find the gorgeous rooms, once devoted to frivolous pleasure, to social scandal-mongering, to political intrigue, perhaps to treasonable conspiracy, to gambling, cheating, and licentiousness, occupied by industrious, though humble, artizans, engaged in beneficial, though unpretending, industries—in fact, to noble instead of ignoble pursuits. And so the vicissitudes of houses, though fashionably fatal, may nationally and socially be the imparters of a new and healthy life.



## II.

### RELIGIOUS HOUSES OF OLD LONDON.

**C**OULD the Manchester warehouseman of Cheapside, or the clerk at work in the Post Office, be suddenly carried back to the thirteenth century, in what a strange world would he find himself! Instead of shops filled with the merchandise of all the earth, instead of a building dedicated to the transmission of intelligence to China or Peru, he would see around him the dismal cells of monks, the dull life of the monastery and nunnery; instead of active and profitable industry, diffusing comfort, nay, wealth, amidst countless thousands, the sloth of religious communities dispensing alms and creating beggars. Monasteries, by the admirers of mediævalism, are said to have been the preservers and propagators of civilization; but when monasticism was at its zenith, Europe was submerged in barbarism; learning and science were unknown—nay, the monks took every means to suppress both, for their progress would have destroyed monasticism, as they did when eventually they shook off their chains. Monks are assumed to have done much for literature; on the contrary, they were its greatest enemies. The literary

treasures of antiquity which survived to their day, the priceless MSS. on parchment which time had not destroyed, were, on their discovery, turned into palimpsests, and the glorious thoughts of classical times were concealed under legends of the saints. When the monks settled in lonely country places, I admit they rendered the country some service by cultivating the soil ; but their intrusion into towns, and especially into London, could only bring disaster. The ground which should have been devoted to commerce, industry, and learning was lost to them, and became the stronghold of idleness and ignorance, an obstruction to the diffusion of wealth, of industry, of enlightened morality ; nay, as to the latter, they positively opposed it by the right of sanctuary which the monasteries claimed.

Before the Reformation, religious houses occupied nearly two-thirds of the entire area of London. St. Martin's-le-Grand takes its name from the collegiate church which was founded there by Withu, King of Kent, in 750. William the Conqueror gave the college all the moorland without Cripplegate, and confirmed their privilege of sanctuary, wherefore prisoners going from Newgate to Tower Hill frequently tried to slip from their guards, and get through the south gate of St. Martin's, which opened on to Cheapside. The privilege of sanctuary was not restricted to the religious house itself, but extended to buildings as far as Aldersgate to the north. The institution was also specially excepted not only from ecclesiastical but from civil jurisdiction.

Adjoining St. Martin's-le-Grand was the extensive Priory of the Grey Friars, or Franciscans, who on their coming to England had first taken up their habitation

in one of the most repulsive localities—viz., in Stinking Lane, Newgate Street—and by this show of humility soon got into great favour with the people; so that, in the reign of Henry III., they could remove to ‘larger premises’—the Priory—and soon after a spacious church, three hundred feet in length, eighty-nine in breadth, and sixty-four high, was erected. In 1429 Richard Whittington here founded a library, one hundred and twenty-nine feet in length, and thirty-one in breadth, and furnished it with books within the next three years. At the suppression of monasteries the church was shut up for some time, and used as a storehouse for goods taken as prizes from the French; but in 1546 the church, with the friary, library, chapter-house, cloisters, and gardens, was given by Henry VIII. to the Mayor and Commonalty of London, together with the Hospital of St. Bartholomew in West Smithfield, and other land, to be made one parish belonging to the church in the Grey Friars, thenceforth to be called Christ Church; and in 1552 the house of the Grey Friars was repaired for the reception of poor fatherless children. But it was not till the reign of Edward VI. that Christ Church Hospital came into full operation.

The Priory of St. Bartholomew, just mentioned, was founded by Henry I. in the twelfth century. He brought in Augustinians, or Black Canons, who opened close by a hospital for the poor; and there were always plenty of them, for the Church was so rapacious in those days that laymen had a hard fight to live. St. Bartholomew’s Church, which had been in existence long before the Priory, was rebuilt and annexed to the new foundation. Rahere, who had been a courtier of Henry I., and

renowned for his wit, repented, while still in the prime of life, of his vicious courses, declared that he had had a vision of the Apostle, turned saint, and became the first prior of St. Bartholomew's. The King granted the Priory great privileges, including the right to hold a fair in the 'smooth field,' or Smithfield; and for many centuries St. Bartholomew's was but another name for the assembling together of the lowest class of mountebanks and players, and for a period of saturnalian licence too frequently ending in tumult. It was not abolished till 1855. At the suppression of the monasteries this Priory underwent the fate of all religious houses; its halls, cloisters, and cells were given up to secular uses, and used as workshops, manufactories, and lodgings for costermongers and tramps. The church, however, was preserved, and has recently been thoroughly restored; the Hospital also survives.\*

A little to the north of St. Bartholomew's was the Carthusian Priory of the Salutation; it was founded *circa* 1372 by Sir Walter Lord of Mauny and Bishop Northburgh. The Carthusians, as is well known, did not live in cells, but each monk had his separate house, and their discipline was most rigorous; they rose at midnight to sing their matins, and never spoke to one another except on festivals and chapter days. The fame of their austerities, however, was of benefit to them, for the bequests and grants made to their Priory were

\* Within the Priory gates was held the Court of Pie-Poudre, which had jurisdiction over offences committed in the fair, and the settlement of debts and obligations. Offences were tried the same day, and the parties punished in the stocks or at the whipping-post the minute after condemnation.

numerous and valuable ; yet, in spite of having grown wealthy, they preserved to the last their reputation for consistent conduct in accordance with the severe rules of Bruno, the founder of the Order. Sir Thomas More lived amongst them for two years, to give himself up to devotion, as it was then understood. At the Reformation they strongly opposed the new doctrine of the King's supremacy ; Henry VIII., however, would brook no opposition on that point. Houghton, the prior, and two of his monks, were arraigned, and after a sham trial led out to execution ; Houghton's mangled body was set up over the gate of his monastery. A new prior was appointed, whose only exercise of his authority consisted in handing the establishment over to Henry. A few of the monks acknowledged the King's claim ; the remainder were either executed, after undergoing the pretence of a trial, or were subjected to such barbarities as to die in prison from starvation and ill-treatment. One monk survived, and, after having been kept in prison for four years, he was hanged. The Priory was successively occupied by different noblemen, and in 1611 it was purchased by Thomas Sutton, and became the Charterhouse as known to us.

In close vicinity to the Carthusian Priory was the Priory of St. John of Jerusalem, founded about the year 1100 by Jordan Briset, a Baron. It early found generous benefactors, so that it comprised within its precincts buildings of palatial grandeur, and at times was a royal residence. In 1382 it was burnt by Wat Tyler's mob, but it rose more gloriously from its ashes, the rebuilding going on till just before the Dissolution, when Thomas Docwra, then lord prior, the

same who granted the lease of Hampton Court to Cardinal Wolsey, rebuilt the well-known southern gate. The revenues of the house were reckoned to amount to £2,385 12s. 8d. After the Dissolution the Priory became a storehouse for the King's toils and tents for hunting and for war; in the time of Queen Elizabeth it became a playhouse, the Master of the Revels living in the house; but Queen Mary restored it to the Knights Hospitallers. The church, however, was half ruined by the Protector Somerset, to obtain materials for the great house he was building in the Strand. In 1706 it was bought by Simon Michell, a member of the Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn, who sold it to the Commissioners for fifty new churches to be built in the Metropolis, and who made it a parish church. The crypt under this church and the gate, which was once the residence of Cave, and immortalized by him in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (on the cover of which it still appears), are all that remain of the ancient priory, its other buildings having gradually disappeared.

Jordan Briset, who, as we stated above, founded the Priory of St. John, also founded near it the Nunnery of St. Mary, of the Benedictine Order. There is some doubt as to which foundation preceded the other, but we need not discuss this point; there was but little difference in the time in which the two were founded. The nunnery was on the slope of a verdant hill descending to the Fleet River, or River of Wells, as it was called in that part of its course. Something of its early history can be gathered from the register of the Priory, written in the time of King John (1199-1216), and preserved among the Cottonian MSS. in the



British Museum. It was on the site now occupied by the modern Church of St. James, Clerkenwell, and the adjoining buildings, and then comprising fourteen acres. The nuns were known as the 'black' nuns, from the black robes they wore. Briset granted to the nuns also, as an additional endowment, the site of a mill. The revenues of the nuns were in after-times considerably augmented by the munificent donations of several noble personages. Among the strange gifts they received was one from the prior of St. John, Roger de Veer, viz., one of the six water-pots in which Jesus changed the water into wine! When we read of such follies, we become fully reconciled to the suppression of institutions from which they could emanate. The nunnery was suppressed by Henry VIII. in 1539; Isabel Sackville, of the family of the Sackvilles, ancestors of the Duke of Dorset, was the last lady prioress. A pension was granted to her and several of the sisterhood. The buildings of the nunnery consisted of the 'chief mansion house, cloisters, and other edifices, buildings, courts, and quadrants, together with the orchard or garden'; the Priory is shown on Aggas's Map of London of 1560, the outermost buildings to the north-west of Smithfield being marked 'Clerkenwell,' where the boundary wall encloses an irregular square of considerable extent, with a smaller square enclosure to the east, which is supposed to have been the burial-ground. The Church of St. Mary consists of a low-bodied nave and chancel, with a massive square tower, as may be seen in various views taken before its demolition in 1788. After the dissolution of religious houses the Priory passed through the hands



of several laymen, and its site was gradually covered with modern buildings.

But it is time we returned to the City. Close by Cripplegate was Elsing Hospital, founded in 1331 by William Elsing, a citizen of London. It was, like all other similar institutions, primarily a religious establishment, in this case consisting of one warden and four secular priests, who were daily to say 'Masses, Matins, the Hours, Vespers, and Compline in the chapel.' The hospital part was only of secondary consideration; the maintenance of the priests to pray for the soul of the founder was always the leading motive in these foundations. It appears that the Elsing Hospital was mismanaged, for in 1431 Henry IV., at the request of the Bishop of London, the patron and ordinary of Elsing Hospital, granted to its custos his licence to transfer divers lands and impropriations in Essex and Hertfordshire yet remaining to the then prior of Elsing Hospital, which by ill-management had lost and wasted most of its estate. The Jews having been driven from the Old Jewry, the site of their synagogue was given by Henry III. to the begging friars, *fratres de Sacca*, from their wearing sackcloth. The order having been suppressed by the Council of Lyons, their convent became a chapel and adjunct to Grocers' Hall.

Between the Poultry and Guildhall was another pious foundation of a master and twelve brethren of the Order of St. Austin, the hospital of St. Thomas the Martyr of Acon or Acres. The buildings abutted on Ironmonger Lane, and the establishment was valued at £277 3s. 4d. per acre.

Austin Friars, near Old Broad Street, derives its

name from the priory of begging friars of St. Augustine, founded in 1243 by Humphrey Bohun, Earl of Hereford and Essex. It was very wealthy, covered a large extent of City ground, and its church had all the magnificence of a cathedral. At the Dissolution it became the town residence of William Paulet, first Marquis of Winchester. The church was given by Edward VI. to the Dutchmen of London, who still own it.

There was a church dedicated to the mother of Constantine at Great St. Helen's as early as 1180. About 1210 a priory of Benedictine nuns was founded here by William, son of William the goldsmith. The priory included a hall, hospital, dormitories, cloisters, and offices. The nuns' hall, at the north of the present church, was purchased by the Leathersellers' Company, who used it as a common hall till 1799, when what remained of the conventual building was pulled down to make room for St. Helen's Place. At the Dissolution the priory was valued at £314 2s. 6d. per annum.

We find that our space will not allow us to continue giving details of the various religious houses yet to be mentioned: we must confine ourselves to enumerating them with few and brief notes.

Outside the City-wall to the east there were St. Mary's Hospital in Shoreditch, and a Benedictine nunnery at Holywell (Holywell Lane commemorates the site); outside the wall was the abbey of nuns of St. Clare, called the Holy Trinity, minoresses, founded in 1293 by Edmund, Earl of Lancaster, Leicester, and Derby, and brother to Edward I., to receive nuns who were brought from Spain by his wife, Blanche, Queen of Navarre. Its grand ruins were not removed till 1797. There were,

further, the Abbey of St. Mary of Grace, a Cistercian monastery, founded by Edward IV., and richly endowed by him;\* and the hospital and church of St. Katherine, east of the Tower, and sometimes called Eastminster, founded by the widow of Henry II., largely endowed with lands, rents, and tenements in East Smithfield, Kent, and Hertfordshire. On November 16, the date of King Henry's death, one halfpenny was to be distributed in alms to one thousand poor people. The public-houses must have done well on the day of distribution, for what was the good of saving one halfpenny? On the demolition of the priory buildings to make room for the St. Katherine's Docks the hospital was transferred to Regent's Park.

Returning to the City, we come to Crutched or Crossed Friars, or Friars of the Holy Cross, the locality of which priory is commemorated by the street of that name. Burnet, in his 'History of the Reformation,' tells a story of the surprisal of the prior by the visitors appointed by the King in a very anti-monastic act. Close to Crutched Friars was the Priory of the Holy Trinity, founded in 1108 by Matilda, the wife of Henry I. In Crooked Lane, Eastcheap, William de Walworth, citizen and merchant of London, founded in the reign of Richard II. a college of one master and nine chaplains, 'to celebrate for ever for that King, the said William,

\* During the first week of May of this year (1900) the excavations for the new offices of the Mint, which stands on the site of the old monastery, were said by some newspapers to have brought to light portions of the old foundations of the monastery; but by personal inquiry at the Mint I found that the alleged discovery was an invention, sprung from the penny-a-liner's fertile brain. Not a vestige of the old monastery remains.

Margaret, his wife.' The house was dedicated to St. Michael. At Blackfriars the monks so called, or Dominicans, the Thugs of the Papacy, had a magnificent monastery, into which they moved from Lincoln's Inn, their first settlement in London. The monastic buildings extended from Ludgate Hill to the Thames. On a portion of the site is now the *Times* office—what a contrast! On the other side of the Fleet was the equally magnificent monastery of the White Friars, or Carmelites, which, like that of the Black Friars, had the privilege of sanctuary; hence that part of London had a very bad reputation, even after the suppression of the monasteries, for the sanctuary rights remained in force after them.

Outside the City was the Savoy Hospital, for five secular chaplains to pray for the good estate of Henry VIII. and Catherine, his consort, and for the souls of Henry VII. and Elizabeth, his consort. On the site of the now demolished Northumberland House stood the hospital of St. Mary Rouncival, a cell to a priory of that name in Navarre. It was founded and endowed by William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, in the reign of Henry III. It was suppressed by Henry V., and refounded in 1476 for a fraternity or brotherhood. It was finally suppressed at the Dissolution, and coming to Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, he erected on its site Northampton, afterwards called Northumberland, House.

The Hospital of St. Giles, for persons afflicted with leprosy, was founded by Matilda, wife of Henry I. There were, of course, an oratory and officiating priests attached to it. A surgery and skilled doctors might have been more useful.

Last, but not least, within London proper, we must name Westminster Abbey, which was founded as a seat of Benedictine monks by Edward the Confessor in 1066, when he placed therein certain relics, viz., two pieces of our Lord's cross, a piece of His seamless coat, with other relics of the Blessed Virgin and of the Apostles. From the fact that at the Dissolution the value of the Abbey was reckoned at £3,471, its magnificence and importance may be inferred. All that now remains of it are some of the offices tenanted as the school and the church.

Among the outlying religious houses north of the Thames we have yet to mention a convent of Benedictine nuns, established in William the Conqueror's time at Bromley, of which, however, no trace remains, unless, as some say, the old church retains a portion of the chapel of the convent. It was dedicated to St. Leonard's; there were a prioress and nine nuns. There is a great dispute among antiquaries as to the origin of this house, but it need not concern us. There was at Stratford an abbey of Cistercian monks, now called West Ham Abbey, founded in 1135. The picturesque gateway, the only remnant of the abbey, was standing in 1793, and a view of it is to be seen in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for October of that year. In 670 St. Erkenwald, Bishop of London, founded a Benedictine nunnery at Barking, which afterwards became of great importance, and had many noble and even royal abbesses. Scarcely a vestige of it remains, except the gate of the outer court, commonly known as the Fire-Bell Gate, because the curfew is said to have been hung in it (the curfew is still tolled during six months of the year at 8 p.m.). The gate now forms the entrance to

the churchyard ; it has two stories, the lower one being the entrance gateway, and the upper one a chamber, containing a piece of sculpture of the Crucifixion. The Templars had a priory at Hackney, and the Temple Mills in Hackney marshes preserve their memory.

There were several religious houses south of the Thames. Of these we can only mention St. Mary Magdalene at Bermondsey, a Cluniac monastery, founded in 1082 by Aylwin Childe, a wealthy citizen of London, which in course of time became very powerful and rich. St. Mary Magdalene's Church stands on the site of the old conventual church. In Grange Walk is a part of the gatehouse, and a few old bits of wall of the monastery remain here and there. Where now stands St. Mary Overies Church, Mary, the daughter of the ferryman who carried travellers in his boat from Southwark to the City, built a nunnery, which was afterwards converted into a college of priests, who erected the first timber bridge over the river. The downfall of the monks, whatever may have been the motive of the King who suppressed them, was a benefit to the community. London, and especially the City, would not now be what it is had they continued to exist.

To sum up, there were eight friaries, five priories, four nunneries, five colleges, seventeen hospitals with resident brotherhoods—monasteries, in fact—and eight other religious fraternities. And yet in those days the London populace was infamous for its savagery ! But, as Voltaire says, religion in those days was a matter of accommodation with Heaven. Those knights and eminent citizens had a deal to compound for, and so monasteries and religious fraternities grew rich.



### III.

#### HORRORS OF OLD LONDON EXECUTIONS.

THE traveller who had spent many years amidst barbarous and semi-barbarous nations, and on his return to Europe, when he saw a gibbet by the roadside, exclaimed, 'Now I know that I have returned to civilization,' would have been more than pleased had he come to London, and that not particularly long ago; for from whatever point of the compass he had entered the town, he would have been cheered by the sight of such a sign of civilization. In the east or north he would have discovered gibbets at Aldgate or Pentonville; in the west, Tyburn Tree would have been good for his eyes had they been sore; and going City-wards, he would have encountered the gibbets of St. Giles and Smithfield. Had he approached London from the south, he would at St. Thomas à Watering, in Southwark, have seen the gibbet; and had he come up the Thames, Execution Dock and Bugsby's Hole would have shown him a whole assortment of gibbets; and on landing and crossing London Bridge, it would have afforded a sight grateful to a patriotic mind—a row of human heads, heads of so-



called traitors, stuck on iron spikes ; and had he prolonged his walk to Temple Bar, the same pleasing and humanizing spectacle would have greeted him. Not that the civilizing apparatus was confined to certain fixed spots ; in the good old times, whose chronology is somewhat uncertain, Governments knew it was their duty to provide their subjects with elevating spectacles which could be enjoyed without much trouble, and so sometimes the exhibition was brought to their very doors. Then the haberdashers and mercers and other peaceful citizens in 1293 could witness in Cheapside the cutting off of the right hands of three men for rescuing a prisoner arrested by an officer of the City. In 1326, on the same spot, at the Standard in Cheap, the Bishop of Exeter, Treasurer to Edward II., was beheaded ; in 1341 two fishmongers underwent the same fate for seizing the Mayor, Andrew Aubrey, by the throat, for which execution the King, Edward III., greatly congratulated and commended the Mayor. In 1381 Wat Tyler beheaded Richard Lyons and others there, and in 1450 Jack Cade beheaded the Lord Say on the same spot. Even rebel leaders knew what was due in the civilizing way to the people. Criminals were frequently executed near the scene of their guilt. Those who suffered for their part in the riots of 1780 were put to death in those parts of the town where their crimes were committed ; in 1790 two incendiaries were hanged in Aldersgate opposite to the house to which they had set fire ; Guy Fawkes and his co-conspirators were executed, with the usual barbarities, in Old Palace Yard ; ‘the Bailiff of Romford was executed,’ says Stow, ‘upon the pavement of my door, where I then

kept house,' at Aldgate. The last occasion on which execution at Newgate was departed from was in the case of a sailor, named Cashman, who suffered death in 1817 in Skinner Street, opposite the house of a gunsmith whose shop he had plundered. The gunsmith objected, but was overruled for the sake of example.

And in those good old days executions were not confined to a simple hanging exhibition ; no, the public were treated to picturesque, dramatic *tableaux vivants*. Beheading made a brave show with its scaffold, the victim, the comfort-bestowing 'ordinary,' the masked headsman. The doomed man being dragged on a hurdle through the roughly paved or unpaved streets, being bumped on the projecting stones, or soused by the dirty puddles on the way, afforded an elevating and instructive sensation to the rabble, and the final scene—say, at Smithfield, when the sentence involved something beyond mere beheading or hanging—was something to give us, as we read the accounts thereof, a very high opinion of the wisdom and humanity of our ancestors. What noble, gentle-minded men the judges must have been who could, with passionless equanimity, deliberately and honestly deliver sentences like the following: 'That you, the prisoner, be conveyed from hence to the place from whence you came, and from thence that you be drawn to the place of execution upon a hurdle, that there you be hanged by the neck, that you be cut down alive, that [something too repulsive and savage to be mentioned], and your bowels taken out and burnt in your view, that your head be severed from your body, and that your body be divided into quarters, your head being set on London Bridge,

and your quarters on the City gates. And the God of infinite mercy have mercy on your soul.' Yet the judges pronounced such sentences by the score, and then went to lunch. And such sentences were not pronounced in Dahomey, but in London, the capital of England; and not far back in the Dark Ages, but late in the seventeenth century. And the sentences were duly executed, to the great delight and edification of the citizens of London, who thronged Smithfield to see the show. Six Romish priests, as such, to refer but to one instance of such an execution, underwent this awful punishment in 1679. Then, to vary the entertainment provided for loyal subjects, there was an occasional boiling in oil, which, as the torture was very slow, afforded considerable amusement to the crowd. One Richard Rose, cook to the Bishop of Rochester, was so boiled to death in Smithfield, in 1531, for poisoning sixteen persons with porridge. The punishment was deserved, yet it did not justify his judges in inflicting it. Burning alive was another variation, due to the inventive faculty of legislators. Generally the victim was tied to a stake, and faggots piled around him or her—for women were no more spared than men—were set on fire, and kept burning till the body was consumed. Hundreds of men and women were so burnt. Henry VIII., in his religious zeal, and to show his impartiality, heightened the fun by having six victims, three Protestants and three Catholics, drawn on three hurdles, a Protestant and a Catholic on each, to Smithfield to be burnt. Anne Askew is one of the best known victims of the royal monster. Whilst in prison she was racked, and the attendant of the torture-

chamber not using as much force as in the opinion of the Chancellor Wriothsley, who was present to hear her confession, he should have done, the Chancellor threw off his robe, and worked the rack himself so unmercifully, that almost all her bones were dislocated. What a splendid instance of judicial and religious zeal ! Queen Elizabeth kept the Smithfield ball rolling ; how that cruel virago came to be called ‘ Good Queen Bess ’ is more than anyone can tell ; but the folly of nations is boundless. The first burning in Smithfield\* was that of Sir John Oldcastle in 1414. He was not tied to a stake, but suspended by chains from the cross-beam of the gallows, and burnt to death by a slow fire. It was a sentence instigated by the Church, and carried out by its representative, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had introduced from Spain the barbarous punishment of burning contumacious heretics—and heresy was what Oldcastle was charged with.

May 1, 1517, was what historians have called Evil May-day. There was a serious tumult in London in consequence of the great encouragement given to foreign artificers and traders, who, it was said, prevented Englishmen from gaining a living, and treated the latter and their complaints with the greatest contempt, boasting of the favour they were held in by the King, Henry VIII. The ferment spread, and on April 28 a number of foreigners were assaulted in the streets, some being struck, others buffeted about, and some thrown into a canal ; moreover, a rumour was spread

\* Some writers suppose that the burning took place at St. Giles’s ; but the locality is immaterial—the fact is undoubted.

that on May-day the City intended to kill all aliens found in it. The Lord Mayor ordered all citizens to stay indoors and keep their servants within. The apprentices, however, then a very unruly set, paid no attention to this, but indulged in riotous conduct in the streets; watermen, porters, and others joined them in the attack that was finally made on the foreigners' houses, many of which were wrecked. About four hundred persons who had taken part in the riot were apprehended, and thirteen of them were adjudged to be drawn, hanged, and quartered; ten pairs of gallows were set up in divers places in the City, and the gallows were set on wheels, so that they could be moved to the houses which had been attacked, and the culprits executed before them. On May 7 the first execution took place. Seven or eight persons had been drawn on hurdles to the Standard in Chepe, and one of the condemned men had already been executed, the others standing by with ropes round their necks, when an order came from the King to respite the execution, and eventually all the prisoners, including eleven women, were pardoned. Even Henry VIII. dared not execute so many at once.

But the fun waxed fast and furious when the British Solomon came to the throne, and went in for witch-torturing and burning. Being physically as well as mentally contemptible, he was proportionately conceited, and fancied his life and crown were continually aimed at by the servants of Satan as a very grand catch indeed, and so he considered that it behoved him to put an end to the damnable crime of witchcraft. He passed a law which made witchcraft—a totally impossible crime—of itself a capital offence. He fanaticized

and brutalized the public mind, so that the nation in course of time looked on his proceedings against witches as perfectly justifiable. Thousands of men and women, young and old, died by the slow torture of burning during his reign, after having undergone every kind of fiendish torture, many modes of applying it having been invented and personally superintended by him. As astounding a fact as the diabolical devices of the King is the fact that he, and other tyrants with similar tastes, could find tools to carry them out. And remember, that not one man or woman who went to such an exhibition was sure that he or she might not on the same or any following day be by some secret enemy denounced as a witch—and in those days denunciation meant condemnation.

Smithfield has seen strange scenes; in the fighting times it was a place of high festivity, of jousts and tournaments; then of ordeal of battle; then it became the playground of theological demons, who got Kings and Queens to be their executioners. Henry VIII. burnt poor wretches for denying his ecclesiastical supremacy, Mary burnt Protestants, and Elizabeth Anabaptists. Finally it became, till closed by authority, the Gehenna of cattle.

From Smithfield, which became too much hemmed in by houses, the place of execution was transferred farther west to St. Giles's. The gallows stood at the corner of Tottenham Court Road and Oxford Street; a pillory, stocks, and a pound adorned the same spot. In 1837, when the ground was opened for a sewer opposite Meux's brewhouse, ten or more skeletons were discovered; they probably were those of malefactors who,



after execution, had been interred under the gallows. Elm-trees must have been very abundant in London a few centuries ago, else how are we to explain that at Smithfield the spot for executions was the Elms, between the horsepond and the Fleet; that at St. Giles's there was an Elm Field, and that at Tyburn there also was a grove of elm-trees?

Some of the accomplices in Babington's plot against Queen Elizabeth were executed here, though Babington himself suffered at Lincoln's Inn Fields. The place of execution was then removed to Tyburn, though it had been used for that purpose as early as the year 1388, when Judge Tressilian and one Nicholas Brambre were hanged there. The number of persons who suffered the penalty of death at Tyburn is great, and they belonged to all sections of society. Roman Catholic priests, conjurers, highwaymen, lords, murderers, poisoners, traitors, sheep-stealers, and forgers were hanged on the spot; here, in 1534, Elizabeth Barton, the Holy Maid of Kent, who had prophesied the speedy death of Henry VIII., and several of her supporters, were executed; and so, a few years later, were Sir Thomas Percy, Sir John Bulmer, and the Abbot of Jervaux, for the share they had taken in a last desperate effort to restore the Catholic religion in England. The condemned used to be taken in an open cart, accompanied by a clergyman and a coffin, from Newgate to Tyburn. At the George and Blue Boar inn in Holborn the criminals would call for their last drink, but at the great gate of the leper hospital, or at the churchyard gate at St. Giles's, they were offered the 'cup of charity,' or 'St. Giles's Bowl,' by a white-robed priest. The gallows of Tyburn was



triangular in plan, having three legs to stand on, and, in consequence of the large number of criminals hanged there, it was a permanent structure. Scores of felons used to be executed there at one and the same time. Says Dr. Johnson in his 'London':

'Scarce can our fields—such crowds at Tyburn die—  
With hemp the gallows and the fleet supply.'

Hogarth's print of the 'Execution of Thomas Idle' gives a good idea of the revolting scenes that took place around the gallows of Tyburn on execution-day.

In 1783 Newgate became the scene of public executions, and remained so till 1868, when an Act was passed directing executions in future to take place within the prison walls. Till the introduction of the 'drop,' it had been the practice either to draw the cart, on which the culprit had been brought to the gallows, from under him, or to throw him from a ladder, by turning it round, after he had ascended to a certain height for the halter to be adjusted. In some Continental countries it was customary for the hangman to jump on the criminal's shoulders, in order by his additional weight to assist strangulation. A drop—which, however, did not prove very successful—was first used at the execution of Lord Ferrers. Once only after the drop had come into use was the old mode of execution revived. Early in this century Anne Huzle, convicted of forgery, and a male culprit, were brought out of Newgate in a cart, and carried to the upper end of the Old Bailey to a spot opposite Green Arbour Court, where a gallows had been specially erected. There the ordinary took his leave, the executioner urged his horse forward, and

the cart was drawn from under the feet of the criminals, who appeared to suffer more than if executed with the drop; and this method of hanging was never again resorted to.

Wapping was, as early as the reign of Henry VI., the place where pirates were executed. Execution Dock, close to the present Tunnel Pier, marks the spot where the gallows was erected. The pirates were left, the gallows overhanging the water, till three tides had overflowed them. As the line of houses along the river was extended, the gallows was removed farther down, to Bugsby's Hole. The criminals were usually hanged in chains, which consisted of an iron frame, or strong network, enclosing the whole body. When Townsend, the celebrated Bow Street runner, was examined before a Committee of the House of Commons as to the advantage of hanging men in chains, he was strongly in favour of retaining the custom, since the men so hanged remained for a long time as warnings to the sailors going up and down the river. But the practice has, nevertheless, been abolished. St. Thomas à Watering, close to the second milestone on the Old Kent Road, was formerly the place of execution for Northern Surrey; the last execution there took place in 1740.

There is in Newgate Prison a place called the Press Yard; it commemorates one of the cruelties of the old Statute Book. If a prisoner refused to plead to preserve his property from being forfeited to the Crown, he was condemned to be pressed to death unless he confessed. In 1659 a Major Strangways was charged with having murdered his brother-in-law, Fussell. The sentence passed by Lord Chief Justice Glynn may serve as a

pattern of similar sentences: 'That he [the prisoner] be put into a place stopped from any light, and be laid upon his back with his body bare; that his arms be stretched forth with a cord, and in like manner his legs, and that upon his body be laid as much iron and stone as he can bear, and more. The first day he shall have three morsels of barley bread, and the next he shall drink thrice of the water in the next channel to the prison door, but of no spring or fountain water, and this shall be his punishment till he die.' Major Strangeways underwent this torture for eight or ten minutes, when he died, some of his friends who were present actually standing on the press to render the weight sufficiently heavy. Victor Hugo, in his 'Laughing Man,' fully describes the process.

We spoke at the commencement of this essay of the frequency of the infliction of the penalty of death; let us support our statement by figures, and we will go no further back than the beginning of the last century. In 1701 were condemned to death 118 persons; in 1702, 49; in 1703, 38, and about the same number in each of the following years up to the year 1713; in 1714 the death-sentences amounted to 108, or, in the fourteen years, 696 altogether. Of these 301 were actually executed, while 391 were reprieved, which fact shows the recklessness with which the judges pronounced those sentences.

One would think that a century's progress in civilization would have somewhat softened the Draconian laws which had hitherto prevailed, and which inflicted the death-sentence for offences some of which in our day are punished with a simple fine. But no; in this present

century, stealing in a dwelling-house or shop—in 1815 a boy eleven years of age was sentenced to death for such stealing!—uttering counterfeit coin, burglary, highway robbery, forgery, stealing from a wharf, keeping company with a gipsy, and numerous minor offences, all involved the death-penalty. And so the game went merrily on at the Old Bailey Sessions. At two of them, in 1814, no fewer than 22 persons were condemned to death, about one-third of them being women; at one session, in 1816, 27 were sentenced; in 1817, in four sessions, 125; in 1818, at six sessions, 126; in 1819, at four sessions, 90; in 1820, at one session, 5; in 1821, at two sessions, 24; in 1822, at two sessions, 20; in 1823, at two sessions, 41; in 1824, at three sessions, 39. The list could be extended indefinitely, but the above is sufficient to show the recklessness with which death-sentences were dealt out by callous judges, even after the powerful advocacy by Romilly\* of the revision of the Criminal Law; still, his advocacy bore fruit in the near future, and gradually the fangs of the sanguinary code were drawn, and the death-penalty was restricted to murder alone. But I fear in this matter the pendulum of public opinion has gone too much to the other side. The nation, misled by cranks called humanitarians and mad doctors, is told that crime is no longer crime, but a disease, to be cured, not by the hangman, but by the medical man. And so the most atrocious, deliberate murderer is reprieved and sent to a lunatic asylum, there to be kept in comfort till it suits him to become rational, when he is dismissed as cured, to commit, if so disposed, a fresh murder. Assuming, for argument's sake, that crime is

\* See 'London Souvenirs,' p. 282.

a disease, to foster and cherish that disease, and to excuse it on the plea that the criminal is not to blame, as he acts as he does only in obedience to his organization, for which he is not answerable—to argue thus is sheer folly. The venomous snake bites a man and poisons his blood to his death in accordance with its instincts and organization ; but, for all that, we destroy it whenever we have the chance. The snake is not necessary to man—it is a constant danger for him ; and therefore the public interest requires that it should be killed. The murderer, whatever his incentive, is not necessary to the community ; he, on the contrary, is highly dangerous to it, ergo he should be removed by speedy hanging. He will not be missed, and his disappearance is a positive benefit to society.

But, not to close these pages too seriously, I will mention a custom once common at executions at Newgate—persons were ‘rubbed for wens.’ Men, women, and children affected with them were introduced to the gallows a few minutes after the culprit had been turned off, and elevated so as to be seen by the populace. The hands of the corpse selected for the operation were untied by the executioner and gently moved backwards and forwards for about ten minutes on the spot affected, and this was supposed to effect a cure. Were this allowed now, I am certain that, in spite of Board Schools and all our educational contrivances, plenty of people would avail themselves of the remedy, for superstitious folly never dies.

#### IV.

#### LONDON'S IMMORTAL ANIMALS.

‘**I**MMORTAL animals!’ I hear the reader exclaim. ‘What can the author mean?’ Well, living animals are not immortal, we know, therefore ours must be dead ones, and so they are—dead in stone, bronze, cement, wood, or any other material you please, and therefore to some degree immortal, for most of those I am going to speak about have preceded, and are likely to outlive, us by a good many years. And they constitute quite a little menagerie, not in bas-relief or haut-relief, nor painted, nor embossed, but of solid, full-bodied, stereostatic figures—in fact, the exact counterparts of the living animals. And all these artificial replicas have their appointed positions, their fixed points, and, like the policemen so placed, are full of information, if you only know how to draw it from them. They are very useful to the topographer and antiquary, the inquirer into history, political, social, artistic, and supply many hints to the philosopher with cynical tendencies. As they are scattered over all parts of London, our tour of visits to them will be rather erratic, but it may prove all the more amusing.



In the days when London houses were not numbered—the practice of numbering them did not come into use till 1764, first in Burlington Street, and secondly in Lincoln's Inn—they were distinguished by signs, which everyone could understand—a very necessary precaution in times when but few people could read or write. Then animals of every kind, quadrupeds, birds, and fishes, could be seen in most streets. Bears brown, black, and white, elephants, dragons, unicorns, apes, civets, hedgehogs, squirrels, hares and hounds, stags, bucks, foxes, horses, cats and kittens, hens and chickens, colts, bulls black and red, cows, lambs, goats, dogs, greyhounds, ravens, cocks, ducks, swans white, black, and two-necked, magpies, pigeons, and falcons, mermaids and dolphins, all these abounded, and formed a menagerie which was sufficiently varied to turn all London into one grand Zoological Garden, and which could be gazed upon without the payment of any admission fee. Sculptors then had a good time; wood-carvers and workers in metals then were fully employed in modelling, casting, cutting, and putting together the figures of animals, real and fabulous, which were bodily set up, and bravely stood storm and tempest and the impudent cockshies of rude boys. But most of these marvels of animal sculpture are now gone, and before more are swept away let us go in search of those that are left.

Whence shall we start? It is immaterial, so let us penetrate into central London from the south—from, say, St. George's Circus let us ascend Blackfriars Road, where we shall speedily come upon a very extraordinary animal. At the angle of a corner-house we behold a dog, apparently of the terrier persuasion, with his head



partly hidden in a pot, which he is licking clean. The casting is evidently an antique; the ancients gilded a great many of their statues and other casts, and this one, dog and pot, is gilt. Learned antiquaries have written big folios to prove that this dog is the original Brazen Dog of Vulcan; whilst others, equally learned, maintain it to be the golden dog which used to be kept in the gardens of Electra, and which fawned on good men, but was implacable against the bad; and the learned further say that the dog's head being hidden in a crock or pot is a symbolical and literal representation that the dog is 'gone to pot,' because he can no longer find any good men—to which latter opinion we incline. But whatever may be the meaning of this monument of the past, of this mystical beast, it is one of the glories of London, which annually draws hundreds of enthusiastic antiquarian dustmen to interview it, when they generally stop till the dog wags his tail, which he does as soon as he catches sight of them. A soulless being, whom I have the misfortune to know, says the dog's head in the crock is really a modern public-house sign, and indicates a dirty, slovenly housewife, who, instead of properly cleaning the vessel after use, allows the dog to lick it out. This is mere prejudice; our golden dog is no public-house sign, since it is exhibited over a hardware shop.

We cross Blackfriars Bridge and saunter up Fleet Street, and having reached Chancery Lane, we behold in front of a house opposite to it that noble animal the cock, and whilst we are waiting for his crowing, which in more pious days 'did remind ye people of ye trumpet at ye resurrection,' we will just say a few words anent this one particular cock, lest you be deluded into

believing this to be the genuine article. This latter, which stood in front of a house on the opposite side till it was taken down (in 1887) to make room for the Bank of England branch, and was a wooden cock, supposed to have been carved by Grinling Gibbons, is no longer exhibited publicly in the street, but is kept inside the house of entertainment which has put up the pseudo article instead. Some years ago the genuine article was stolen, but shortly afterwards it was returned ; to prevent similar accidents in the future, it is, as we mentioned, now kept indoors. It is a relic that London may be proud of.

But this stately bird is but ‘small beer’ by the side of the much nobler animal which stands only a few yards to the west of it. There, on a gingerbread—no, that is not what we meant—on a marble pedestal the griffin rears its majestic and mysterious form. In a certain author we find the following record of this antique :

‘ In the Forest of Dean  
Lived a griffin of old ;  
To London’s dull city  
This Griffin was sold.  
The more is the pity,  
For now all alone  
He stands on a stone,  
Looking right on the Strand  
And on the legal resort  
Which the Law Courts is called,  
Where lawyers tell crammers,  
And swindlers and shamers  
To prison are lagged,  
Unless they wear wigs,  
Or arrive there in gigs,  
Which is a sign, you see,  
Of respectability !’

A work of art which can evoke poetry so sublime as this must be sublime itself, and the griffin *is* sublime, and its erection and preservation are powerful evidence of the appreciation of, and respect for, high art, which distinguish the citizens of London; or else would they have allowed the hideous abortion, which is an eyesore to the beholder and a nuisance to the public, to be erected, or when erected, in spite of all their protests, to remain standing for a day, especially since some of the inmates of the surrounding houses have, in consequence of the constant contemplation of the monstrous structure, been taken to lunatic asylums as raving maniacs?

But let us describe this thing of beauty. It represents that well-known domestic animal the griffin. The appearance of the beast is extremely fierce; its widely-extended wings, faithfully copied from the antique pantomime, inspire awe, and the beholder may, after imbibing several tumblers of Irish, have his eyes opened so as to see the griffin lash his sides with his lovely tail. The animal's position is what heralds designate as rampant, and correctly so, for is not the griffin the guardian angel, the champion of the City, the dragon watching over the gold-encumbered caves of London, the treasure-house of the world, the temple of Mammon, whose high priests are bankers, brokers, and swindlers, and therefore bound always to be on the rampage? The colour of the material composing the griffin leads our country visitors to imagine that it is carved out of green cheese, but we Londoners know it to be made of tin, supplied by the patient and long-suffering citizens of London, alloyed with brass furnished by the City

fathers who stuck up the objectionable monster, and some copper from the noses of the regular guests at City feasts. The pedestal on which this execrable ornament is placed is of that style of architecture known as the *ordo mustaceus*, vulgo gingerbread, and were it not for the policemen who night and day keep watch and guard over the structure and the wild beast it supports, the *gamins* of London would long ago have devoured the confectioner's model, and the citizens thrown the ugly brute into the 'Thames. But there stands the monument of municipal taste. What a pity it stands alone! Perhaps some day the Corporation will set up a turtle on the opposite boundary of the City, and so render applicable to it the words of the poet:

' Know ye the town where the griffin and turtle  
Taste and convenience awfully hurtle?  
It is the city of aldermen plump,  
Who do not patronize Aldgate pump,  
Who, not compelled to count their ha'pence,  
Nobly go in for fat turtles and capons,  
Cheering the toastmaster who at the tiffin  
Bids them adore their protector, the griffin.'

After this excitement let us sober down and stroll along the Strand. Not many centuries ago there stood at its Charing Cross end a noble mansion, known as Northumberland House. The front over the central gateway was surmounted by a large lion, the crest of the Percies. But no longer shall he draw a crowd, filling up the Strand, to see him wag his tail: he is gone, and now lives in solitary state at Sion House, another of the Duke of Northumberland's mansions.

When in the Strand he had a neighbour, and though not on good terms with one another, there is something in not being lonely. The neighbour in question was another lion, who lived on the opposite side of the river, in Surrey, on the top of a brewery, where he now remains, freed from the humiliating presence of his aristocratic rival. How often in days long past have we stood on Hungerford Bridge, watching the two lions fiercely glaring at one another, growling and lashing their leaden tails ! The brewery lion looked with envy on the Percy lion, whilst the latter was savage that a mere beer lion should presume to have stuck himself up so near a peer lion. To us, a nation of beer-drinkers, it is a comfort that the beer lion remains. Millions of people, who annually travel up and down the silent highway, behold the work of art, and have their minds improved ; for art elevates, especially when embodied in so grand a form as beer, which becomes even roaring when bottled. Some antiquaries are of opinion that the beer lion is the lion of the zodiac. They argue thus : this beer lion is known as *Leo Cerevisiæ*. Here is more than a mere allusion to Ceres. Now, we know that Ceres, or Virgo, or the Virgin—that is, Venus—is the sign next to Leo ; we further know from Swiveller's 'Diversions' that beer and rosy wine are synonymous ; we know, moreover, from 'Revelations of the Police Courts'—any volume you like—that Ceres—that is, Venus—is always accompanied by Bacchus ; ergo, this lion really represents Bacchus in the zodiacal sign of Leo. This reasoning seems conclusive.

Considered as a work of plastic art, the beer lion exacts our admiration. What dignified repose in his

outstretched tail ! what Hogarthian lines of beauty in the curves of his haunches ! The statue evidently dates from the most flourishing period of Græco-Noribergensis art, and the name of the sculptor, or otherwise contriver, is said to be engraved beneath the right fore-foot of the beast. Enthusiastic lovers of the antique have repeatedly offered fabulous sums for permission to lift up this foot and ascertain the artist's name ; but the owner of the lion has always refused to gratify so laudable a curiosity—not that he is opposed to the spread of useful knowledge, but because he fears that, if the name were known to others besides himself, the heads of the South Kensington Museum would compel him, as a patriotic duty, to present the lion to their Museum.

As we are still at Charing Cross, let us run down to Whitehall, where there stood, till the month of March, 1899, another lion, a bright red one, at the corner of a short street running out of Parliament Street. He was, it is true, only a public-house sign, and therefore scarcely distinguished enough to belong to our menagerie ; but he was a picturesque object, and a fierce and rampant beast, and, as he and the pub are gone, we will not refuse him this brief record.\*

We will descend to the Embankment. There, between Charing Cross and Waterloo Bridges, stands Cleopatra's Needle, with which she darned her hose, as we have a right to assume, seeing on what a gigantic scale everything was built up in ancient Egypt. Facing that Needle, popularly known as an obelisk—which was set

\* Whilst these pages were passing through the press the public-house has been rebuilt and the lion (though not the original one) restored to a prominent position.



up in its original home as a gnomon—are, to the east and the west, two of those mysterious animals known as sphinxes. Strange animals they are—lions, with the heads and faces and busts of women. Now, as not everyone can be expected to be a sciologist, we may as well state, for the benefit of those who have not studied the subject, that this curious combination of lion and woman is really a duplex zodiacal sign, representing the lion, or the sun, at its highest power, and Virgo, or Ceres, or Mother Earth, the bringer-forth of all we can ever possess—the signs of July and August. The ancient Egyptians were Sabæans; they worshipped the sun and stars, and taught all nations that Mother Earth, or Eve, or Ceres, or the Virgin Mary, for they all mean the same thing, was our true mother, and the Sun our Saviour. And this they symbolized in the Sphinx, which name is simply the Greek word for ‘shutting up,’ ‘secrecy,’ ‘mystery;’ and to the Greeks the Sphinx, whose meaning they did not know, was a ‘mystery,’ just as they turned the nine female figures, representing in Egypt the labours of the nine months during which agricultural work was pursued, and who carried symbolical implements, into the nine Muses. But our Embankment sphinxes seem to be studying a mystery as great as their own—the hieroglyphics on the obelisk. Our country cousins greatly admire the show.

Re-ascending to Charing Cross, we may admire four gigantic lions, which heraldically belong to the couchant variety, and repose in majestic grandeur at the foot of the Nelson Column. But there is a shade of sadness in their otherwise placid features; their conscience still feels a sting whenever they remember the misery their

birth or creation brought on their living brethren in the Zoo, who had to sit as models to the artist who fashioned their counterfeits without even the customary shilling per hour. And they feel this regret all the more because they are immortal; whilst their prototypes have long since become nothing but dead and stuffed lions. Let us leave this mourning quartette, and rush off to Albert Gate, where two noble stags keep guard over the entrance into Hyde Park, as formerly they did at the entrance to the Ranger's Lodge in the Green Park. Those stags are enshrined in the national history, for, as they stood close to the house of Hudson the Railway King, the speculators in railway shares, whilst the mania was at its height, received the name of stags, which still survives in the Stock Exchange annals.

We said at first that our route would be somewhat erratic; let us re-enter Central London, and take a backward glance at Leicester Square, to look at a horse in decay. There it stood in the centre of the square; the effigy of George I. it once bore had gradually fallen off—first the legs, then the arms, then the head, and finally the trunk—so that at last nothing was left but the horse, with a deep indentation in its back where the statue had been riveted on. It had long been made the subject of ribald jokes in the press, until one night it was painted in heraldic colours, and the next morning the statue bore a paper fool's-cap on its head. Finally, in 1874, it had to be removed altogether. Such was its ignominious end. Another good horse gone wrong! It originally stood at Canons, the seat of the Duke of Chandos, whence in 1747 it was purchased, gilt, and set up in the square.

Let us on to Holborn, where we encounter two fine animals. A noble black swan here has charge of a whisky distillery. It was formerly satisfied with having its nest in the wall, but recently it has boldly come out, and now stands forth on a projecting bracket, displaying its elegant form decorated with a gilt beak, collar, and chain. But what has a swan to do with whisky? Probably the distillery adopted it for its sign because that bird is very fond of liquid, as intimated in the lines under a sign at Bandon, near Cork :

‘ This is the swan  
That left her pond  
To dip her bill in whisky.  
Why not we,  
As well as she,  
Become regular toppers ?’

But the moral is as bad as the rhyme.

On the other side of Holborn we are cheered by the sight of another fine animal, a black bull—a splendid addition to our menagerie. From the perfection of its workmanship, we conclude it to be the work of an artist of renown, who was not above working for an innkeeper, as artists nowadays execute orders for soapmakers. This bull’s gilt horns and hoofs and golden belly-band form a striking ornament to otherwise dingy Holborn.

Going thence towards the City, we come to the Viaduct, on the parapet of which stand four winged lions, not the Winged Lion of Venice, though somewhat like him, but more like the Lion of Waterloo, for they each have one paw resting on a globe—symbolical, I suppose, of the British Lion, which with his paw grasps

the world, and will growl if you merely make believe that you want him to release his hold. He is an amiable and placid-looking beast, till you interfere with him; and if you tease him till he begins to lash his sides with his tail, then look out for squalls. And you may be sure those lions think no small beer of themselves, as from their elevation they look down upon the unceasing activity, the boundless wealth, the moral and material progress they behold on all sides. To the north the fires of Smithfield are for ever extinguished, to the south the horrors of the Fleet ditch are abolished, and, looking farther, they behold in a glorious vista Blackfriars Bridge, which, whatever cantankerous critics who were not consulted when it was built may say against it, is a fine architectural achievement, which may give our lions, and the public too, no mean idea of our advance in art and science, which both co-operated in producing so fine a work.

With reference to the figure of the Lion and Ball, we may add that it owes its origin to the mediæval notion that a lion or tiger deprived of her young might be prevented from following them by casting a spherical looking-glass in her way, so that she could see her own image reduced as it rolled under her paw, and thus mistake it for her cub. In sculpture it could only be represented by a ball, which in time became a terrestrial globe, and the lion resting his paw on it became the emblem of royalty.

## V.

### THE PLAGUE'S MILLENNIUM IN LONDON.

‘THE good old times’ is as stupid and mendacious a phrase as ever was uttered. Ask anyone to tell you in what the Past was superior to the Present, and he will be nonplussed. Neither in politics, nor social intercourse, nor literature, nor industrial activity and genius, nor commercial enterprise, nor art, nor mechanical inventiveness, were our ancestors our masters. In manners they were barbarians, and in morals reprobates. In science they were not worthy to tie our shoe-strings. The periods in our history which are considered the brightest in our national intellectuality, what did they produce? Chiefly plays and poems which, instead of adding to human progress, demoralized the Court, and through that the whole nation, down to its very dregs. Nothing will elevate man but science.

‘Mankind would have progressed as fully  
Had Homer e’er remained unknown ;  
But not without the screw or pulley,  
The lever, spring, or wheel, or cone.

How paltry are the poet's notions  
Of Vulcan and his tink'ring crew :  
Look on the steam-moved hammer's motions,  
There poetry in action view !

The above lines refer to only one of the two great branches of science, namely, to mechanics; but the other branch, chemistry, is of even greater importance, for it dives deeper into the mysteries of life, and the application of its teachings has destroyed the possibility of the terrible visitations which once afflicted Europe, and still afflict the East, where ignorance, prejudice, and superstition still resist the use of the preventive means which chemical science has placed at our disposal. The medical faculty possesses only professedly curative means against epidemics—I say professedly, because actually they are useless. And where Governments will not insist on the adoption of preventives, there the epidemics cholera and plague will continue to make their periodical appearances. The ridiculous pilgrimages of Eastern nations, and of some of the Western nations, too, are great spreaders of disease, and should be prohibited in spite of the opposition of priests interested in their continuance. Of course, the improved hygienic conditions in general under which we live have greatly contributed to the suppression of plagues, and these improved conditions we owe to the researches and discoveries of chemical science, as also to the mechanical contrivances which have furnished us with a plentiful water-supply, for it is certain that the want of it is one of the chief causes of an epidemic, and in former centuries London water was both poor in quantity and



bad in quality. Some of it came to public conduits in leaden pipes, some was drawn by water-wheels from the Thames, but most houses depended for it on private wells. All this water was contaminated before it reached the consumer. The conduit pipes were often defective, and filth got mixed with the water; the water drawn from the Thames at London Bridge was liquid mud, and the well water was poisoned by neighbouring cesspools. The houses themselves of the lower classes were filthy; the floors were of loam and strewed with rushes, which were constantly put on fresh without removal of the old, and intermixed with bones, broken victuals, and all kinds of dirt. No wonder that contagion spread with such rapidity! It was not till Sir Hugh Myddelton brought the New River water to London that plagues ceased. The Great Fire, though a terrible calamity in itself, was not without compensating benefit: it swept away filthy and plague-impregnated buildings, and filled up the old wells, so that water had to be laid on—two circumstances which since then have rendered London one of the healthiest cities in the world.

But look at its past: plague after plague devastated it, cholera, sweating sickness, and black death held high festival in it.

In the year 658, and again in 664, a terrible plague nearly depopulated the Saxon city, which then extended from the Tower to the Fleet river only; in 1348, 50,000 people are said to have died out of a population of 80,000; they were nearly all of them buried on the site of the present Charter House. A smaller plot, called No Man's Land—probably on the site of the present

Wilderness Row—and afterwards known as Pardon Churchyard, was used for a similar purpose. The name of Black Death was the significant appellation given to this epidemic; the first symptoms were horrible enough to justify the name. A man apparently in perfect health would suddenly commence to vomit blood. A few minutes later he would fall down dead from sudden and violent inflammation of the lungs. Everything he touched, every place on which he had rested, spread the contagion. If the disease did not kill him at once, his body would be covered with inflammatory swellings, and his agonies would be prolonged for twelve hours, sometimes for from two to nine days. The means to combat this disease were, as already intimated, totally inadequate; ignorance and superstition, and a depressed state of mind as the consequence of both, promoted the spread of infection. Twenty-five million human beings are supposed to have perished through the Black Death epidemic in Europe alone. How many died from it in Asia, whence it came to us, can never be known. Africa also was visited by it; China was its original starting-point. In Europe it led to the wildest fanaticism, showing itself in one direction in the rise and the excesses of the Flagellants, and in another in the fearful persecution of the Jews, of whom at Mayence alone 12,000 were burnt. The Black Death epidemic continued to ravage England to the end of the year 1350. In 1361 the plague again made its appearance, and during the first two days 1,200 persons were carried off, among them the Duke of Lancaster. King Edward III. prohibited the slaughtering of cattle within the City, as the putrefying blood and entrails lying in

the streets, and draining into the Thames, were justly supposed to contribute to the sickness. Between January and July, 57,374 persons were carried off by this terrible pestilence. Another visitation occurred five years after. In 1407, 30,000 of the inhabitants were carried off, and the King, Henry IV., fled to Leeds Castle in Kent. In 1478, the plague again broke out, and raged for fourteen months. In 1485, a new form of pestilence appeared, known as the sweating sickness, which, though mild in comparison with the plague and the black death, and though it sometimes yielded to curative measures, yet was terrible in its ravages. Those attacked were thrown into a violent perspiration, which killed in twenty-four hours; if they survived that time, they generally recovered. Two Lord Mayors, six Aldermen, three Sheriffs, and many thousands of citizens fell victims to the murderous visitant. In 1500, London was again visited by the plague, to avoid the ravages of which the King and his Court, after removing to various places, sailed for Calais. Thirty thousand victims were carried off on this occasion. In 1517, the sweating sickness once more appeared, and quickly decimated the citizens. The disease attacked high and low. Ammonius, the Latin secretary of Wolsey, boasted to Sir Thomas More that his precautions were such that he and his family were perfectly safe. He died the same evening. The epidemic raged for six months before it abated. The King, to prevent the spreading of the infection into his own family, dismissed many of his attendants and officers. As the distemper was peculiar to England, and to Englishmen in foreign parts, it went by the appellation of *sudor Anglicus*, or the English sweat.

In 1521, an infectious distemper raged in the City, which carried off a great number of its inhabitants. Crowded and filthy dwellings, a scanty supply of water, which in itself was impure, and poverty of living, were the chief causes of this outbreak. In 1525, the plague again made its appearance, and Henry VIII. retreated to Eltham. In 1528, the sweating sickness once more visited London with such violence that it carried off thousands in the space of five or six hours, and all public functions had to be suspended. In 1543, the plague again raged so violently in London that thousands of citizens perished by it. The conditions of life in London being such as we have indicated, the plague, though not permanently in virulent activity, was yet always smouldering, as it were; for though the dangerously insanitary condition of London was known to Parliament, and discussed there, nothing was done to remedy it. It was admitted that the whole agglomeration of streets from the City walls up to Islington, all round St. Clement's and Drury Lane, Petty France, Bishopsgate Street, to Shoreditch, yea, Fleet Street and the district around the Temple, 'be very foul and full of pits and sloughs, very perilous and noyous, and very necessary to be kept clean, for the avoiding of corrupt savours and an occasion of pestilence.' An Act was passed that these streets should be paved with stone, and a channel made in the midst of them, at the charge of the ground landlords; it was also enacted that the conduits should be made and repaired for the better watering of the City and its liberties, and that the mayor and citizens should have power to bring water to the said conduits from Hampstead Heath, St. Mary-le-

bone, Hackney, and Muswell Hill. But we all know from experience what time it takes to get the provisions of an Act of Parliament into a working condition, especially when they tread on the toes of privilege and attack private interests, and so all the improvements enacted by Parliament remained a dead-letter for a sufficient length of time to give the old enemy of London, the plague, a further chance of attack. In 1563, the hidden foe burst forth again with greater violence than ever. The Lord Mayor, by command of the Queen, ordered the Master and Wardens of the Company of Clerks to inquire the number of those who died of the dreadful disease within their respective parishes, and to make a certificate thereof. What good this did in stopping the progress of the plague is not on record. Curates and churchwardens were to give notice of houses where the plague appeared, and persons living in them were not to come to church for a month after the cessation of the plague. There was some sense in that. By a further ordinance issued on the same date, July 5, notices with blue crosses printed thereon were affixed to the doors of every house affected, with a writing underneath signifying that the infection was there, and giving directions how to avoid it. This is the first record of any such intimation and warning, but it appears to have been adopted in succeeding plague periods, and especially on an extensive scale during what is called the Great Plague. Mr. John Timbs says that such a cross was found among the broadsides in the Guildhall. It was the ordinary size of a broadside, and bore a cross extending to the edges of the paper, on which were printed the words, 'Lord, have mercy upon us!' In the

four quarters formed by the limbs of the cross were printed directions for managing the patient, regulations for visits, medicines, food, and water. This cross unfortunately has disappeared. During the plague of 1563, every housekeeper in every street or lane was bound to make a bonfire three times a week, till the infection should cease. The Lord Mayor ordered all dogs found in the streets to be killed. The number of people who died in this year in the 108 parishes in the City of London was 20,372, whereof 17,404 died of the plague; and in the eleven out-parishes the whole number of deaths amounted to 3,288, and of these 2,732 died of the plague.

The Act of Parliament of 1543 'for the avoiding of corrupt savours and an occasion of pestilence' evidently was ineffective, for in 1569 London was again visited by the plague, and in a most virulent degree. The Lord Mayor and Aldermen issued the most stringent instructive and precautionary orders as to the treatment of persons attacked, and measures to be adopted to check the spread of the distemper. I cannot find any record of the number of people who fell victims to it on this occasion. There seemed no way of keeping the plague out of London, and in 1573 it again made its appearance. By the Queen's desire, the Lord Mayor's Show was for that year suppressed, and so was public acting, 'till the whole deaths have been, by twenty days, under fifty a week.' Yet again, in 1591, the plague broke out in London with such violence that application was made to the Queen and Council that upon the infection of any house the sound in health might be removed from the infected to proper places



for their preservation, and that provision might be made for the poor, who were reduced to the greatest extremities. To prevent the spread of the contagion, all legal business was transferred to Hertford. But in spite of this and other precautionary measures, 10,675 persons perished in this year from the plague.

In 1603, the preparations made by the citizens of London for the coronation of James I. were interrupted by a plague which spread its ravages through the capital with more merciless virulence than any similar calamity since the time of Edward III. But that pompous fool, James I., would not have his coronation deferred, and so it took place on July 25, though His Majesty did not ride through the City, as had been customary on similar occasions, nor were the citizens allowed to go to Westminster, for fear of infection—857 persons having died of the plague within that week. The Lord Mayor and principal citizens officiated at the banquet as chief butlers, and on the following day the royal mountebank felt in so jovial a humour that he knighted all the City aldermen who had not already undergone that ceremony. But the plague fiend was not awed by the farcical exhibition; on the contrary, the disease continued to grow more violent, so that Bartholomew Fair, and all the fairs within fifty miles of London, were for the time suppressed. In the course of this year, 30,578 persons died of the plague.

The accession of Charles I. fell in no less unfortunate times than that of James I. He was proclaimed King on March 28, 1625. In the June following, Henrietta Maria of France, the new Queen, arrived in London, but the preparations made for her reception

were arrested by the dreadful plague which broke out in London, and which, in the course of twelve months, carried off 35,000 persons. Its virulence may be inferred from the statement that in the comparatively small and not overcrowded district of Stepney 2,978 persons died of it. In 1637, the plague was again at such a height that the legal business of Trinity term had to be suspended.

But a fiercer onslaught of the dreaded enemy had yet to come, that which is known as the Great Plague. In the year 1663, the plague made shocking ravages in Amsterdam, where 20,000 persons were speedily carried off. Our Government had timely notice of it, and measures were taken to prevent its importation into this country, but all in vain, for about the close of the year 1664 it was brought over to London in some Levant goods, which came from Holland. London being an ill-built city, with narrow streets, and houses overcrowded with families, rendered the inhabitants very liable to take the infection. The goods were taken to a house in Long Acre. Here two Frenchmen died, and speedily the distemper spread through London, and from the end of 1664 it continued active till February, 1666. To describe its progress would require a volume. It is, moreover, a subject of popular knowledge; we therefore confine ourselves to a few leading facts. The symptoms of the disease were very distressing. First, a horror—many died of fright, without having the disease—then vomiting, delirium, dizziness, headache, and stupefaction; then fever, watching, palpitation of the heart, bleeding of the nose. But the signs more peculiar to the pestilence were the pustules, which the common people called blains, buboes, spots,

carbuncles, and the marks called tokens. The buboes were hard, painful tumours, with inflammation and gathering upon the glands, behind the ears, the armpits, and the groin. These tumours, at their first appearance, were very hard, and the event of the disorder was prognosticated from their sudden or slow increase, from their genuine or untoward suppuration, and from the virulence of their contents. The pestilential spots appeared chiefly in the neck, breast, and back; the genuine pestilential characters, generally called tokens, as being the forerunners of death, were minute distinct blasts, which had their origin from within, and rose up in little pyramidal protuberances, sometimes as small as pin-heads, at other times as large as a silver penny, having the pestilential poison chiefly collected at their bases, gradually tainting the neighbouring parts. They were also derivable from external causes, as from the injuries of air, when the pestilential miasmata were pent up and condensed, and by that means their virulence increased so that life was immediately extinguished when they reached the nobler organs. The glandular swellings, the tokens, frequently ran their course in a few hours; some patients died the same day they were seized, while others survived a week, and even longer, to die slowly of exhaustion from bleeding and suffering in general. Medical science could do little for the sufferers; the authorities took what precautionary means they could to arrest the spread of the epidemic, but these proved ineffectual. The houses which were infected were shut up, and red crosses put upon them, and watchmen placed before them to prevent the egress of the inmates; but as many houses had several issues,

and there was only one watchman to each, it was impossible to prevent whole families from secretly leaving, and thus spreading the disease. All business was suspended ; no one went about. Nothing was heard but the rumbling noise of the carts which went about at night, the attendants calling out, ‘ Bring out your dead ! ’ Great pits were dug at Bunhill Fields and Tothill Fields, into which the dead were shot, without coffins, clothes, or funeral ceremony. As dogs and cats were supposed to be capable of conveying the noxious effluvia in their fur or hair, all that could be got hold of were destroyed ; it was computed that 40,000 dogs, and five times as many cats, were thus put to death. Whoever had the opportunity to do so fled from London ; still, some men of note stayed, braving the danger, to render what assistance they could. Sir John Laurence, the Lord Mayor, and Monk, Duke of Albemarle, remained, and so did Lord Craven, who had so bravely fought the battles of Elizabeth, titular Queen of Bohemia. He built a lazaretto in Pesthouse Fields at Westminster, and, I believe, also the other one at Bunhill Fields, into which persons afflicted with the plague were received for treatment. At first the disease raged chiefly in St. Giles’s, Holborn, and towards Westminster ; thence it travelled to Clerkenwell, Cripplegate, and the eastern parts of London ; it also visited the poor parts of Southwark. The deaths rose from 1,000 to 8,000 in a week, and about 100,000 persons are believed to have died during the time the plague lasted. This plague ended the millennium of the terrible foe ; shortly after came the Great Fire, and put a stop to its return, for the London which had invited it ceased to exist.

## VI.

### KILBURN PRIORY.

THE abbot and monks of Westminster Abbey were having a good time. They were rich ; Kings bestowed on them houses and lands, and if there was anywhere a manor or something of the sort they coveted, and no King gave it to them, they, in the inaccessible recesses of their scriptorium, leisurely and cleverly forged a deed of gift, or grant, supposed to have been issued by the then King's immediate or remote predecessor, and the ruling Sovereign generally found it good policy to accept the forgery as a genuine document and confirm the grant. Thus, for instance, the monks of Westminster, by false 'great charters' from King Edgar and Archbishop Dunstan, fabricated long after the death of either, got hold of the Manor of Paddington and of lands north of it.

Well, the Westminster monks fared sumptuously every day ; their rents came in regularly ; their mills, driven by water obtained from the Tyburn by a branch of that river directed to the monastery, had always plenty of corn to grind\* ; their larder and cellar were

\* 'Merrily rolled the mill-stream on,  
Merrily went the mill.'

well stocked ; and so the holy fathers waxed fat and lusty, and their faces shone like full moons. But extremes lead to the opposite extremes : sometimes excessive luxuriousness will suddenly turn to rigid asceticism. And thus it came to pass that, in the reign of Henry I., one of the monks, suffering from a fit of dyspepsia and hot coppers, suddenly took it into his head to go in for a life of penitential self-mortification. He had been one of the most energetic at their orgies to pass the bottle round, to roar somewhat wicked songs, and occasionally to smuggle into the monastery illicit provisions in the shape of pretty girls. But now, his head aching very much and his stomach being out of order, he saw the error of his ways, and meant to atone therefor by going into the hermit business—then, as always, a very profitable one. It pays even in our modern times.

The present writer remembers a hermit who roosted in a cell outside the town of Fribourg, in Switzerland, who lived like a fighting-cock on the fowls, eggs, butter, cheese, ham, and bacon, with an occasional bottle of Kirschwasser, which the farmers' wives and daughters, in return for the fervent prayers he exercised them in, and the blessings he called down on them, deposited in his cell. But he was too greedy ; his exactions being not confined to mere edibles, but extending to favours of quite another kind extorted from his female devotees, at last became so troublesome that the farmers indicted him for a nuisance, and an unsympathetic magistracy, having inquired into his goings-on, condemned him to ten years' penal labour. Here was a good man gone wrong !



But to return to our Westminster monk. His name was Goodwyn, and, as we have seen, he was determined for the future to be really good, and turn hermit. So he roamed about looking out for a suitable spot; there were no house or estate agents in those days who had hermitages to let, and to whom he could have applied for a card to view. In his wanderings he came to Cuneburn, the modern Kilburn, and there on the banks of a little brook, the 'bourne' of Cune, which ran near that spot into the Westbourne, he espied a spot which took his fancy as very suitable for his retirement from a world with which—and 'all its belongings,' as my authority says—he was disgusted; though, according to another authority, which asserts that 'he appears to have acquired position and influence in a manner romantic and scandalous,' he, like King Solomon, did not become disgusted with the world till he had thoroughly enjoyed it.

Well, pious Goodwyn took leave of his brethren at Westminster—whether there was a farewell banquet or not is not on record—and settled down at Kilburn. Whether he built his cell himself, or employed a builder and architect, we are not told. But his religious fervour seems to have evaporated very quickly; in a few years he was tired of single holiness. Tradition says that between the years 1128 and 1134 he gave the hermitage and lands he had procured to be attached thereto to the monastery of Westminster; but as the Abbot of Westminster Abbey had already laid claim to those lands by the forged charters referred to above, this gift seems somewhat problematical.

But one thing is certain—namely, that Goodwyn was

consoled in his solitude by the arrival of three nuns, pious virgins, named Emma, Gunilda, and Cristina, who had been Maids of Honour to Queen Maud; and the Abbot of Westminster appointed holy Goodwyn their superintendent and spiritual adviser. The cell was turned into a nunnery, and dedicated to St. Benedict—that is to say, in plain English, Goodwyn became the chief of an Agapemone, anticipating Prince by nearly nine hundred years. The special duty of the nuns was to pray for Edward the Confessor, the founder of the abbey. To stimulate their zeal, Herbert, the abbot, endowed the new nunnery with lands at Knightsbridge and a rent of thirty shillings. The Knightsbridge land is called Gara—probably Kensington Gore. Provisions and various other good things were assigned to it from Westminster; so that, Goodwyn having now three pious virgins to pray with him, and no anxiety as to supplies, it is very much to be feared that he reverted to his former dissolute habits, and became a kind of holy Sardanapalus.

It was customary in those days to keep the day of the death of an Abbot of Westminster as an anniversary. ‘On such an occasion the manor of Paddington was put wholly into the hands of the almoner, and entrusted to his discretion as to the expenses incurred for the celebration of the anniversary. On that day he was to provide fine manchets (the finest kind of bread), cakes, crumpets, cracknells, and wafers, and a gallon of wine for each friar, with three good pittances or doles, with good ale in abundance at every table; in the same manner as upon other occasions the cellarer is bound to find beer at the usual feasts or anniversaries in the

great tankard of twenty-five quarts. He shall also provide most honourably and in all abundance, for the guests that dine in the refectory, bread, wine, beer, and two dishes out of the kitchen, beside the usual allowance. And for the guests of higher rank, who sit at the upper table with the president, ample provision shall be made. . . . The almoner is likewise to find for all comers in general, from the hour when the memorial of the anniversary is read to the end of the following day, meat, drink, hay, and provender of all sorts in abundance ; and no one, either on foot or on horseback, during that time shall be denied admittance at the gate.'

The above rules were specially laid down for the anniversary of the death of Walter, the Abbot of Westminster, who died on September 27, 1191. Many other directions are given in the document which cannot now interest us much, but there is one proviso which we must reproduce, viz. :

'The Almoner shall also make allowance to the nuns at Kilburn, both bread and wine, as well as provisions from the kitchen, supplied on other days by the cellarer and the cook ; neither shall the nuns lose their ordinary allowance, on account of the extraordinary.'

From this it appears that the pious virgins of Kilburn were well taken care of.

Of Goodwyn it is said that he and the nuns had relationships of a nature not now tolerable. The nuns were dispensed from all vows of celibacy, or of any other kind, and it appears that Maids of Honour to the Queen were provided for in the nunnery after their dismissal from Court. The establishment flourished, gifts from

all sorts of places came on condition for the soul's repose of troubled persons; donations were made by those who thought their neglect of religious ordinances while living atoned for by enriching religious institutions upon their death-beds. Besides the lands already mentioned, the priory of Kilburn—for in the thirteenth century it already had its church and chapter-house—possessed the manors of Milton and Middleton, in Surrey, bestowed on the nuns by John Somerie. It also had lands at Leatherhead and Packenham; and in 1371 the Bishop of Rochester appropriated the church of Cudham, in Kent, to the priory of Kilburn, reserving a competent portion to the Vicar, and also to the Bishop, and to the Church and Archdeacon of Rochester due and accustomed rights, as also to the church and prior of Rochester their portion of tithes and certain lands within the bounds of the said church, and on this account reserved a rent of ten shillings yearly at St. Michael. The priory of Kilburn had a right to five fields and other small portions, in the whole 221 acres, in Apulderfield. At first the nuns, in consideration of the portion of revenue assigned to them, agreed to keep the daily office for the welfare of King Edward III.'s soul as long as he should live and afterwards, including in their prayers Simon of Canterbury and all the faithful. But they soon found this irksome; and as it also involved some expense, they asked to be released from this duty, pleading poverty, arising from the hospitality their priory, situate on a high-road, was bound to exercise towards the many strangers who claimed it, and especially the numerous pilgrims to St. Alban's shrine. The Bishops of London and

Rochester nearly came to loggerheads over this affair, but eventually it was settled by the latter in favour of the nuns.

The good sisters, indeed, seem to have been adepts in getting rid of claims and liabilities. During the long reign of Edward III., probably because they prayed for him so fervently during the early part of it, they managed to procure an exemption from the payment of taxes to the Crown, on account of the dilapidated state of their 'little house,' though this expression savours somewhat of mock humility, for the priory must even in that day have been an establishment of considerable extent and importance. At the period of the dissolution of monasteries, Kilburn Priory, though it may never have been a building of imposing appearance, was yet nearly complete as a religious house. There was a hall, a chamber next the church, the middle chamber between that and the prioress's chamber, the prioress's chamber, the buttery, pantry, and cellar, an inner chamber to the prioress's chamber, a chamber between the latter and the hall, the kitchen, the larder-house, the brew-house, and the bakehouse, three chambers for the chaplain, the confessor, and the hinds or husbandmen. There was also the church. Unfortunately, no ancient views of the priory are in existence. In Park's 'History of Hampstead,' however, there is an engraving showing what was left of the building in 1750—a small house with a gable roof, with a lower barn-like structure adjoining. But the walls, with massive buttresses, indicate that the buildings must have been of very solid construction. Nothing of all this is now left.

According to a tradition recorded by Mr. John Timbs in his 'Romance of London,' which, however, he says, is not traceable to any authentic source, the pious sisters of Kilburn had another lucky windfall, another addition to their possessions, through the following circumstances. Stephen de Mertoun, being enamoured of his brother's wife, and she resenting his proposals, which she threatened to make known to her husband, Sir Gervase, he resolved to kill his brother, which he effected by seizing him in a narrow lane at a place called St. John's Wood, near Kilburn, and stabbing him in the back, whereupon Gervase fell upon a projecting rock, which was dyed with his blood. Recognising as he was expiring his brother, he upbraided him with his cruelty, adding, 'This stone shall be thy deathbed.' Stephen, finding that his brother's widow still refused to listen to his proposals, confined her in a dungeon, and strove to forget his many crimes by a dissolute enjoyment of his wealth. But his conscience becoming oppressive, he determined to submit to religious penance, and ordering his brother's remains to be interred at Kilburn, he erected over them a handsome mausoleum, built with stone brought from the quarry where the murder was committed. The identical stone on which his brother had expired formed part of the tomb, and on Stephen's eye resting on it, blood was seen to issue from it. Struck with horror, he made confession of his crime, demised his property to the priory of Kilburn, and soon after died of remorse.

Besides the donations and bequests of superstitious or terrified sinners, the priory enriched its coffers with the sums exacted from ladies desirous of being received into



the Order. In the City archives there is the following record : ‘ On the 13 December 1393, for certain reasonable causes by the friends of Matilda, who was daughter of Richard Toky, and now an orphan, shown and set forth, it was assented to by the Mayor and Aldermen, that the said Matilda, taking the goods that were left to her by will, should become a nun in the priory of Kelbourne, and there assume the religious garb. And upon this precept was given to the chamberlain to pay to the prioress of the House of Kelbourne aforesaid, to the use of the said Matilda, £38 5s 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.’ To the use of the said Matilda, including the farthing (query). But from an entry in the records which follow the above extract, it appears that Miss Toky was kept out of the use of her inheritance for ten years ; for it was not till October 12, 1403, that Lady Emma de Saint Omer, Prioress of Kelbourne, went to the City ‘to receive of Stephen Speleman, Chamberlain of the City, the said sum of £38 5s 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. Therefore, as well the said Chamberlain as the Court were wholly discharged thereof.’ Thus for ten years the City, its chamberlain, or somebody else, had the use of that money, paying no interest therefor, and not Miss Toky ; and we may reasonably assume that she had still less the use of it after its passing into the clutches of Lady Emma.

Well, Henry VIII. was on the throne, and having fallen in love with Anne Boleyn, he wanted to get rid of Catherine, his wife. The Pope objecting to the divorce, Henry at once became convinced of the errors of Popery, and sided with the Reformers. The suppression of the numerous monasteries and nunneries throughout England immediately suggested itself as a

splendid opportunity of spiting the Pope and filling the royal coffers, for the religious houses were well-soaked sponges of wealth, which it would be highly profitable to squeeze. The conventual establishments whose incomes were less than £200 a year were the first to be suppressed. The opposition of the small fry would not be formidable; their suppression would accustom the people to this new mode of requisitioning. Kilburn Priory, being valued at £74 7s. 11d. per annum, was one of the first to go. Its landed property was seized for the benefit of the King, and an inventory taken of its goods and chattels. Among the items we find: ‘In the middle chamber, 2 bedsteads of boards, viiid.; 1 feather-bed, vs.; 2 mattresses, xvd.; 2 old coverlets, xxd.; woollen blankets, viiid.; 2 pieces of old hangings, painted, xd. Of books there were: 2 books of *Legenda Aurea*, the one in print, the other written, both English, viiid.; 2 mass books, one old written, and the other print, xxd.; 2 chests with diverse books pertaining to the Church, books of no value; 2 legends, viiid., the one in parchment, the other on paper.’ As to church-furniture and vestments, the nuns seem to have been better off, for besides altar-cloths, hangings, copes, chalices, the following articles are found in the inventory: ‘A relique of the holy cross, closed in silver and gilt, set with counterfeit stones and pearls, worth ijs. iiijd. Item, a cross with certain other reliques, plated with silver-gilt, ijs. iiijd. A case to keep relics in, plated and gilt, vd. Item, a clock, vs.’ The orchard and cemetery were valued at xxs. by the year, and one horse of the colour of black, vs. The lead and the bells were valued at £71. The commissioners, Sir

Roger Chomley and others, took all the ready money they found, viz., £40.

Anne Brown, the last prioress, was probably a member of the house of Lord Montagu. The church was dedicated to St. Mary and St. John the Baptist; the latter, in his camel-hair garment, was portrayed on the priory seal. The last vestiges of the priory were, as already intimated, swept away in the middle of the last century; but many street names, such as Abbey Road, Abbey Gardens, Priory Road, and others, remind us of its former existence, and Abbey Farm includes the site it occupied.

At the dissolution of the smaller monasteries in 1536, including Kilburn Priory, Henry VIII. granted this latter to the Knights Hospitallers of St. John, in exchange for their manor of Paris Gardens, in Southwark; but when, three years after, the large monasteries also were suppressed, and Kilburn reverted to the King, it was granted to John, Earl of Warwick, who immediately alienated it to Richard Taverner. From him it passed through various families, till it became the property of Sir Arthur Atye, who died in 1604. It remained in his family till 1772, when it passed to Richard Myddleton of Chirk Castle, in Denbighshire, and from him to Richard Marsh, and eventually to the Uptons, by one of whom the church of St. Mary was erected on a site adjoining that of the ancient chapel.

Kilburn Wells is spoken of in our chapter on London Wells and Springs in 'Old London,' p. 286.

## VII.

### QUEER LONDON STREET-NAMES OF THE PAST.

‘**W**HAT’S in a name? . . . A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.’ True; but if, for instance, it went by the name of onion, no one would care to smell it, and thus it would waste its fragrance, and man would have one enjoyment the less. There is a good deal in a name. Had the children whom Pope Gregory noticed in the slave-market at Rome not been Angli—on which the Pope made a wretched pun—England might not so soon have been drawn, a rich prize, into the net of the Church. Louis Napoleon became Emperor of the French simply on the strength of his name. Hundreds of incompetent officials are pitchforked into positions of importance and dignity, to the injury of public interests, solely because of their patronymics. People, in spite of the experience of centuries that it is not so, will go on believing that a name must be in harmony with the abstract idea or concrete thing to which it is given. Fine feathers make fine birds, they think, and if a man or place has a grand-sounding name, they are at once prejudiced in favour of the one or the other. This often leads to disappoint-

ment. The man who is unacquainted with London street terminology frequently forms totally erroneous ideas of places. The dweller in town writes to his friend in the country, dating his letter from Paradise Row, or from Elm Tree Gardens. The countryman, coming to London, expects to find his friend in a kind of *rus in urbe*; but on reaching Paradise Row, he discovers it to be a narrow lane of grimy brick walls, and Elm Tree Gardens a street without a blade of grass, much less trees. Of course, the designation may originally have been correct, but the speculating builder has taken away the fine prospect Paradise Row once boasted of, and Elm Tree Gardens records what was there before he stepped in and cut down every tree.

The names of streets are such as the builder gives them, either his own or such as his fancy dictates; they may be derived from signs, usually public-house signs, or from trades carried on in the streets; from buildings standing in them—churches most frequently supplying the name; from a corruption of the original name; from popular facetiousness or ridicule, occasionally; from the name of the owner of the land; from royal personages; from trees growing in or near them; from their situation with regard to other streets; from historical or private occurrences; in fact, the origins of street and house names are difficult to enumerate. Many curious instances of the way in which names are bestowed will be found in the following list of London streets and buildings, which for the reader's convenience of reference is arranged alphabetically.

*Adam and Eve* was a favourite sign with tavern-keepers centuries ago, and the public were familiar with

it, since the two mythical personages were always introduced in the miracle plays, Eve appearing as she is represented in Holbein's well-known painting.

*St. Andrew's Undershaft.*—This church, at the corner of St. Mary Axe in Leadenhall Street, derives its surname of Undershaft from a maypole, anciently called a shaft, which was annually raised in the street on May-day, and was taller than the steeple.

*Angel.*—This has been a favourite sign for hundreds of years, and so, 150 years ago, when London was much less in size than it is now, there were nearly sixty Angel alleys, streets, and courts, most of them deriving their names from public-houses with that sign.

*Artichoke.*—This plant, introduced into England in the reign of Henry VIII., gave its name to two alleys, two courts, to a spot in Ratcliffe Highway, to four lanes, and two yards.

*Bagnio Court*, Newgate Street, derived its name from the bagnio or bath there.

*Bag o' Nails*, a public-house sign, is a singular corruption of 'Bacchanals.'

*Baldwin's Gardens*, Leather Lane, is one of the delusive names. Gardens in Leather Lane!

*Bandyleg Alley.*—Our ancestors were not squeamish in the names they gave to streets; many of them could not now be pronounced before ears polite. 'Bandyleg' is a mild specimen of the kind. There was a Bandyleg Alley near the Fleet ditch, and there were two Bandyleg Walks, one in Maiden Lane and the other in Queen Street, Southwark. The name was evidently meant for ridicule.

*Bassishaw*, which has quite an Oriental flavour about



it, reminding one of Padishah, seems a queer name for a ward of the City of London, but it is merely a corruption of Basinghall, once the principal house in it.

*Battersea* is a corruption of Patrick's Eye, the district having formerly belonged to the Abbey of St. Peter of Westminster.

*Bear Key*, or quay, was the name of two streets, distinguished as Great and Little, once near the Custom House, and the name was derived, not from bear, the animal, but from a small sort of barley, also called water-barley, large quantities of which used to be landed on the quay to which the streets led.

*St. Bennet Fink*.—This church was dedicated to St. Bennet, the founder of the Benedictine order of friars, and received its surname of Fink from its rebuilder, Robert Fink, after the destruction of the original church in the Great Fire of 1666.

*St. Bennet Sherehog*.—This was another church destroyed by the Great Fire, and rebuilt by Benedict Shorne, a fishmonger. His name was first corrupted into Shrog, and finally into Sherehog.

*Bermondsey* probably derives its name from Bear-mund, the Saxon lord of the district, and *ea* or *eye*, an island or spot near the river-side; a name still surviving in the longer 'eyot.'

*Bethnal Green* derives its name from the old family of the Bethons, who had possessions in Stepney in the reign of Edward I.

*Bevis Marks* was once the property of the Abbots of Bury in Suffolk, and therefore was called Bury's Marks or Marches, which was eventually corrupted into Bevis Marks.

*Billingsgate*, according to a tradition, was built by Belin, a King of the Britons, about 400 years before our era. Stow says that one Billing once owned the wharf, and gave it his name.

*Billiter Lane* was originally, after its builder, called Belzeter's Lane, which in course of time was altered to its present designation.

*Black Mary's Hole* was the name given to a few dragging houses near Cold Bath Fields; it was derived from a black woman called Mary, who lived by the side of the road in a small circular hut built of stones.

*Bloomsbury* is a corruption of Blemundsbury, the name of the lords who once owned the manor.

*Blowbladder Street*, which ran from Cheapside to St. Martin's-le-Grand, received its name from the bladders formerly sold there, when the shambles were in Newgate Street. Stow says that it was taken up by milliners, sempstresses, and such as sell a sort of copper lace, called St. Martin's lace. The street was originally called Stinking Lane, which see.

*Bread Street*, in Cheapside, was so called because it was formerly the only place where bread was sold.

*Breakneck Alley* in the Minories, *Breakneck Court* in Fleet Street, and *Breakneck Stairs*, leading from Green Arbour Court, now demolished, down to Farringdon Street, indicated the character of the street. Ned Ward, in the *London Spy*, speaks of returning downstairs with as much care and caution of tumbling headforemost as he that goes down Green Arbour Court steps.

*Bucklersbury* was originally called Bucklesbury, from a manor and tenements belonging to one Buckles, who lived there.

*Bunhill Fields* was originally called *Bonhill Fields*. Modern writers suppose Bonhill to be a corruption of Bonehill, from the many victims of the Great Plague supposed to have been buried there. But the name Bonhill appears in a deed nearly a hundred years before the Great Plague.

*Candlewick Street* took its name from the candle-wrights, or wax and tallow chandlers, who formerly inhabited it.

*Cat and Mutton Fields* is the popular name of London Fields, Hackney, given to them because an ancient public-house with the sign of the Cat and Mutton faces them.

*Cheapside* is derived from the ancient term Chepe, which means to buy (from the Saxon *koppen*, or German *kaufen*). Eastcheap and Westcheap—the latter was called Cheapside—were both places set apart for trafficking.

*Chelsea* was at different times written ‘Cealchylle,’ ‘Chelched,’ ‘Chelsith,’ and in other ways; our ancestors were not particular as far as spelling went; a vowel more or less made no difference, and consonants had to take care of themselves—they might go or come as they pleased. The most probable origin of the name is ‘chesel,’ and ‘ea’ or ‘eye;’ these two latter words we have already explained. The word ‘chesel’ is familiar to all acquainted with Weymouth and its ‘chesil’ beach, and ‘chesil’ is simply the German word *Kiesel*, which means pebble. Before the construction of the Embankment Chelsea beach was much encumbered with pebbles deposited there by the action of the river.

*Clink*.—The Liberty and prison of the Clink were in

Southwark, and belonged to the Bishop of Winchester. The prison was chiefly used for such 'as should brabble, prey, or break the peace.' Clink is an obsolete word for key.

*Codpiece Row* was one of the elegant expressions our forefathers delighted in; it was in the eighteenth century improved into Coppice Row. But there was a Codpiece Court in Petty France, Westminster (now York Street, adjoining the Aquarium).

*Crackbrain Court* was another satirical name, though no doubt founded on facts, given to a narrow passage in Rosemary Lane, Whitechapel.

*Cree*, in St. Catherine Cree Church, arose from the English spelling of the word Christ as pronounced in French. Such is the explanation given. But as I cannot find that the church ever had any connection with French people, the explanation remains unexplained.

*Cross*.—White, Black, and Red Cross Streets indicate the existence of religious houses or of monumental crosses.

*Crutched Friars* took its name from the monastery of the Holy Cross at the south-east corner of Hart Street, near Tower Hill. Crutched is simply a corruption of crossed,

*Cuckold's Court* and *Point* at Rotherhithe are facetious names given to localities by our humorous ancestors.

*Cursitor Street*, Chancery Lane, took its name from the clerks called *Clerici Brevium de Cursu*, who had their offices in that street, where they made out such original writs as were required for counties and cities.

*Cut-throat Lane*, Cockhill, Ratcliff, and another at

Upper Shadwell, like Crackbrain Court, were grimly facetious names given to those localities.

*Deadman's Place*, near Dirty Lane, in Southwark, took its name from the many burials which took place in it at the plague periods.

*Dirty Alley, Hill, Lane*, of which there were more than a dozen in London, and all of which did honour to their names, were popularly so christened.

*Farthing Alleys*.—There were three of them. *Farthing Fields* were near Gravel Lane, and *Farthing Street* was in Spital Fields.

*Five* seems to have been a favourite number in street nomenclature. There was *Five Bell Alley* in Moorfields, and *Five Bell Court* in Leadenhall Street, so named after public-houses with that sign. There were three *Five Feet Lanes*; *Five Fields* at Chelsea; two *Five Foot Alleys*, one in Old Gravel Lane, and another in Petty France; a *Five Foot Court* in Old Fish Street Hill; a *Five Pipe Alley* in Pickleherring Street, Southwark; a *Five Inkhorn Alley* in Whitechapel; and two *Five Inkhorn Courts* in Whitechapel, these latter deriving their names from signs of public-houses.

*Foul Lane*, in the Borough, was a satirical name given to it.

*Friday Street* was inhabited by fishmongers, who supplied the food for the weekly fast.

*Frying Pan Alleys*.—There were seventeen of these, all named after public-houses with that sign.

—*Garlick Hill*, Thames Street, took its name from the Garlick Market formerly held there.

*Gingerbread*.—There were two *Gingerbread Alleys* and two *Gingerbread Courts*, all in the City.

*Gossips' Rents* and *Row* were facetious names given to tenements in Tooley Street.

*Grub Street* was inhabited by poor writers of small histories, dictionaries, and occasional poems—in fact, by literary hacks. It is now called Milton Street, as if to rehabilitate it.

*Gutter Lane*, Cheapside, is a corruption of Guthurn Lane, the owner thereof.

*Hangman's Gains*, near the Tower. Calais, Hammes, and Guisnes being lost in the time of Queen Elizabeth, many of the inhabitants fled to England, and settled near St. Catharine's and the Tower; and Hammes and Guisnes, whence many came, in the end conferred on the lane the corrupted name of Hangman's Gains.

*Houndsditch*.—The portion of the City moat from Aldgate to Bishopsgate was called Houndsditch from the number of dead dogs thrown into it. Hence the name of the street. But other portions of the ditch, near Barbican and between Ludgate and Newgate, were also known by the name of Houndsditch, probably for a similar reason.

*Knightrider Street* is supposed to take its name from knights riding through it on their way from the Tower to Smithfield tournaments.

*Limehouse* was originally called Limehurst, from the number of limes which grew in the locality.\*

*Lothbury* was probably called Lathbury at first, the street being chiefly occupied by founders and workers with the lathe.

\* In the fifteenth century we meet with the name 'lyme-hostes,' explained to be the houses where lime was burnt on that spot.



*St. Margaret Pattens.*—This latter word is a corruption of ‘patines,’ which decorated the ceiling of the church.

*St. Martin’s Outwich* church owes its additional epithet to William and John de Oteswich, who were some time the proprietors thereof.

*St. Martin’s Pomary*, formerly at the corner of Ironmonger Lane, is supposed to have owed its epithet to apple-trees growing round it.

*St. Mary Axe*, Leadenhall Street, took its name from a house with the sign of an axe opposite the east end of the church so-called.

*St. Mary-le-Bow* took its name from being the first church in London built on arches, which popularly were called bows.

*St. Mary Woolchurch-Haw*, which stood on the east side of the Stocks Market, where the Mansion House now stands, received its additional appellation from a beam in the churchyard for weighing wool. Haw means a small close or piece of land next to a house.

*St. Mary Woolnoth* took its name from the wool staple in the Stocks Market, noth being a corruption of nigh.

*Mincing Lane* is an improvement on Mincheons (*monacæ*) Lane, originally so named after the neighbouring nunnery at St. Helen’s.

*Minories.*—This street takes its name from the abbey of nuns of St. Clare, called Minoresses.

*Norton Folgate* is a corruption of Norton (northern because north of Bishopsgate) Fallgate, it having probably been a drawbridge only over one of the wide ditches in the marsh north of the City.

The *Old Bailey* took its name from the bailiff's house formerly standing there; or possibly from the *ballium*, or outer space, near Ludgate.

*Petticoat Lane* was at first called Hog Lane, when it had hedges and rows of elm-trees on either side. It is now called Middlesex Street, and is essentially the old clothes district, whence probably its name of Petticoat Lane.

*Petty France*, Tothill Street, now called York Street, Westminster, was originally so called from its being first inhabited by French people. There was another Petty France, near Old St. Bethlehem, the present New Broad Street.

*Piccadilly*.—The origin of this name has greatly exercised the ingenuity of philologists, but it would be waste of time to discuss their far-fetched and often wild speculations. To us the simplest explanation seems to be this: at the commencement of the street now called Piccadilly there was towards the end of the sixteenth century an ordinary famous for *picadillo*, which is the Spanish for hotch-potch, hash, or stew, and the dish gave its name to the street.

*Poplar* obtained its name from the great number of poplar-trees that anciently grew there.

*Portsoken*.—This is the name of one of the City wards. 'Soke' means an estate, the 'port' is the Latin *porta*, or gate; and as the soke here in question, which was the property of Queen Maud, adjoined Ald-gate or Ald-port, the ward became Portsoken Ward.

*Pudding Lane*, Monument Yard, where the Great Fire began. Of this lane Stow says: 'Then you have another lane, called Rother Lane or Red Rose Lane, of

such a sign there, now commonly called Pudding Lane, because the butchers of Eastcheap have their scalding-house for hogs there, and their puddings, with other filth of beasts, are voided down that way to their dung-boats on the Thames.'

*Rotten Row* most probably is a corruption of *route du roi*, the King's road.

*Scalding Alley*, in the Poultry. In this street there was a large house where the poulterers, who had their stalls in the Poultry, scalded their poultry.

*Scotland Yard* took its name from a palace built there for the reception of the Kings of Scotland when they came to do homage for the county of Cumberland and other fiefs held by them of the Crown of England.

*Sermon Lane*, Doctors' Commons, is altered from Sheremoniers' Lane. A 'sheremonier' (probably from shears and *manus*, hand) was a man who cut and rounded the plates to be coined into sterling pence or other coin of the realm.

*Shoreditch* did not take its name, as popularly supposed, from Jane Shore, but from a former possessor of the manor, Sir John Sordig or Sordich, who flourished *circa* 1339.

*Smock Alley* was the elegant name of a passage near Hockley-in-the-Hole, and of another appropriately situate in Petticoat Lane.

*Stocks Market*, where the Mansion House now stands, was so named after the stocks first set up there.

*Stinking Lane*, now King Edward Street, was so called from the offal and garbage thrown there by the butchers of Newgate Market. Formerly it was also

known by the names of Blowbladder Street, Butchers' Hall, and Chick Lane. Stinking Lane was the first London dwelling-place of the Grey Friars or Franciscans.

*Threadneedle Street* was originally known as Three-needle Street, probably from such a sign in it. But as Merchant Taylors' Hall is situate in the street, this latter may have acquired the designation of Threadneedle Street as a nickname.

*Vauxhall* has no connection with Guy Fawkes, as vulgarly supposed, but took its name from that of the owner of the manor, Fulke de Breanté, a follower of King John. It was at various times spelt Faukeshall and Foxhall. The old manor-house was afterwards known as Copped or Copt Hall.

*Wapping*, inhabited largely by sail and rope makers, probably took its name from the term 'wapp,' the rope wherewith the shrouds are set tight with wale-knots.

*Watling Street* is supposed by Leland, the eminent antiquary (died 1552), to derive its name from the Saxon *atheling*, i.e., a noble street; but more probably it is derived from Vitalian, who was its surveyor.

*Wormwood Street* took its name from the herbs growing therein.

*Wych Street*.—The old name of Drury Lane was Aldwych, and the present Wych Street is at the lower end of Drury Lane.

This list comprises some, though not all, of the curious names of streets and buildings formerly or now existing in London. If these names have no other merit, they have at least that of variety, quite refreshing in these

days of endless King, Queen, Duke, Princes, Charles, George, York, Crown, Cross, Old, New, East, and West Streets. Better than such monotony is the outrageously vulgar or comical name of some retired tradesman, who invests his money in jerry-buildings, and immortalizes his name by them.

## VIII.

### OLD LONDON HERMITAGES.

**H**ERMITAGES in London sounds as incongruous as palm-trees at the North Pole. But we know that whole forests of palms and other tropical trees are buried under the ice and snow of the Arctic regions, and we have indisputable evidence that in former centuries there were hermits and hermitages in London : both facts showing that at one time the polar regions were favourable to the growth of a tropical vegetation, and that London once presented a fine field for the hermit business.

At the present day, when a man has run through his estate, or is at his wits' end what to do for a living, honest or otherwise, he turns company promoter, or outside broker, or bookmaker. In the times of our pious forefathers he turned hermit, which was a highly respectable and not unprofitable pursuit. It was more pleasant, too, than becoming a monk. The latter had to submit to rules and discipline, his personal freedom was greatly curtailed, and there were no means or chances of earning an honest penny. But the hermit was as free as air to mix with his fellow-men, and to



perform the duties he professed when it suited his convenience, with no superior to order him about, and no colleagues to watch and interfere with him. When he had pitched on some cavern or ruined building, he sat down and waited, and soon the credulous people, who thought him capable of working miracles, of curing diseases, and of holding celestial converse, came and overwhelmed him with gifts, and built him a chapel or oratory with a small belfry; so that many a hermit fared like a very Clerk of Copmanhurst. There were, indeed, some honest men among these hermits; but many of them were mere impostors, ‘great loobies and long, that loth were to swynke’ (*i.e.*, earn their living by labour), as the ‘Vision of Piers Plowman’ informs us. As early as the reign of Edward III. (1327-1377) Parliament declared that the persons who called themselves hermits were no other than vagrants and beggars; but the hermits proved themselves to be really gentry of that sort by continuing to exist and flourish too, and by sticking to their wall-built hermitages like leeches or limpets—we say wall-built, because they seem to have been rather partial to the old City wall; we have records of several of them.

At Cripplegate there was such a hermitage, dedicated to St. James, the advowson of which was held in 1293 by the prior of St. Mary Bethlehem; it appears to have continued till within a short time of the dissolution of religious houses, for Joseph Ames (died 1759), in his ‘Typographical Antiquities,’ or history of printing in England, mentions three times (in 1514, 1517, and 1532) ‘The Forest of Redemption, compyled by the Anker [anchorite] of London Wall, wreched

Symon.' We will exclude this 'anker' from our general censure of the tribe, as he seems to have been somewhat of a literary character. From its situation close to the City wall, the hermitage was known by the name of the Hermitage-on-the-Wall, and probably the hermits were the guardians of the well in the neighbouring street, called Monkwell Street.

In the reign of Edward I. the hermitage appears to have been in an unprotected state, 'chalices, books, vestments, images, bells, and other ornaments and goods' being 'frequently after the decease of hermits abstracted and carried off by ecclesiastics as well as laymen,' which induced the King to appoint the Mayor of London its guardian. Six years after, the custody of the Hermitage on the Wall was transferred to the Constable of the Tower; and in 1229 it was recognised as an appendage of Garendon, an abbey of Cistercian monks in Leicestershire. In 1311 a fanatical monk seems to have been the hermit of this place. He took upon him, on hearing confessions, to grant indulgences for five hundred days to all comers, for which he was proceeded against by the Bishop of London. Probably there was as much business as fanaticism in the monk's assumption. In 1315 the Mayor and Aldermen granted the hermitage, with all its appurtenances, to Sir Gilbert de Hardyngham for the whole of his life, 'provided always that he shall properly behave himself, he rendering to the commonalty one half mark per annum at the four terms of the year for the same. And the said Gilbert binds himself to lay out forty shillings of costs upon the repair of the said hermitage now upon his first entry . . . and also to maintain the rooms of the

same hermitage the whole time aforesaid against wind and rain, and will put them in proper repair; nor shall it be lawful for the said Gilbert to let or assign the said hermitage to any other person without the special leave of the Mayor and Aldermen for the time being. And the said Gilbert doth will and grant that if he shall not make the said outlay, it shall then be lawful for the chamberlain to eject him therefrom.' Leases, it is evident, were then drawn up as stringently as now.

In the reign of Edward I. a chantry had been founded in this hermitage for the soul of Sir Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke (half-brother of Henry III.), by his wife, Mary de St. Pol, Countess of Pembroke. In 1399 the Mayor, by the authority vested in him, presented to this chantry one John de Rither, a monk and priest. At the dissolution of the monasteries the hermitage was granted by the Crown to William Lambe, a cloth-worker, who bequeathed it to his company for their use, and as a place for distributing various charitable donations. It was thenceforth, and now is, called Lambe's Chapel. About the year 1825, on the demolition of the upper part of the chapel for the purpose of rebuilding it, a curious crypt beneath it was discovered. Descending a narrow flight of ten or a dozen steps, a low, vaulted chamber was found, 26 feet long and 20 feet wide. Nine short columns, with Saxon or Norman capitals, supported the groined roof. At a few paces from the eastern end of the crypt was the base of a round tower, which strengthened the north-west angle of London wall. The cloth-workers, on rebuilding this ancient chapel, took care to preserve the ancient remains, and to support them by new work where necessary.

There was another hermitage close to the church of Allhallows-on-the-Wall, dedicated to St. Osmond. One of the hermits seems to have done pretty well at the business, for the parish books, commencing 1445, record his benefactions to the church.

A third hermitage adjoining London Wall was that of St. Botolph, close to the church of that name in Bishopsgate Street. An 'anker' there had his chapel.

And here we may observe that though in the first ages of Christianity hermits—eremites, from the Greek word meaning wilderness—really were solitary monks, living in caves or rudely-constructed huts, a change came over the spirit of their dreams. As the church grew rich, it aimed at something higher. As abbeys sprang up, they, anxious to extend their influence, established filials in various places, building here and there cells for the residence of one or more monks in recluse spots, usually near some remarkable spring. The chief monk of his cell was called the hermit, and to it was attached a small chapel or oratory, in which the usual orisons and vigils were performed. And sometimes purely secular employments were combined with those of hermits proper; thus they undertook the collecting of tolls, and the mending of roads, as will more particularly be described in our account of the Highgate Hermitage.

In 1325 a garden called the Hermitage, on the south side of Aldgate, till then held by Roger atte Watre, was granted at the Husting of Common Pleas to Peter de Staundone, corn-dealer, to hold for the term of his life, he paying for the same to the commonalty ten shillings yearly in the Chamber of the Guildhall. This

garden probably derived its name from a hermitage which is said to have existed in a small projecting turret near Aldgate in the reign of King Edward I. As the priory of the Holy Trinity was close to Aldgate, and Queen Matilda, the founder thereof (in 1108), gave to Norman, its first prior, the port of Aldgate and the soke or franchise thereof, we may assume that there was here a hermitage, exercising the right of collecting tolls referred to above.

We mentioned that in the reign of Edward III. Parliament denounced hermits as rogues and vagrants, but in spite of this the fraternity seems to have continued to flourish. In 1412 one William Blakeney, a shuttlemaker, who pretended to be a hermit, was brought up at the Guildhall for that he, 'whereas he was able to work, went about barefooted and with long hair, under the guise of sanctity, and pretending that he was a hermit, and that he had made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Rome, Venice, and Seville, and under pretence of such falsehood had received many good things from divers persons; . . . and whereas he acknowledged that for the last six years he had lived by such lies and deceits, and that he never was in the parts aforesaid . . . he was adjudged to be put upon the pillory for three market days, one hour each day, with a whetstone hung from his neck.' The whetstone was then and for some centuries after the distinctive mark of a liar.\*

From the great number of streets, alleys, etc., going by the name of 'Hermitage' at Wapping, such as Hermitage Street, Hermitage Court, Hermitage Dock,

\* For the explanation of this custom see my 'History of Lincoln's Inn Fields,' p. 212 (Elliot Stock, 1896).

Hermitage Stairs, Hermitage Yard, we may assume Wapping to have been a favourite spot of hermits. In Stow's time there was a brewhouse in that locality known as the Hermitage, 'so called,' says the chronicler, 'of a hermit sometime being there.' In fact, the author of 'London and its Environs,' 1760, distinctly says that Hermitage Court, in Red Maid Lane, was near the Hermitage. If it was the only one in that locality, it must have been one of some importance to have given its name to so many streets. They were all swept away when the London Docks were constructed.

Going westward, we come to the hermitage of St. Clement's Well in the Strand, 'an anker in a cell,' says an ancient record. St. Clement's Well was a place of pilgrimage as early as the reign of Ethelred, and naturally it had a hermit for its guardian, which must have been a very profitable office, especially after the murder of Thomas à Becket, when, with the stream of pilgrims constantly flowing towards Canterbury, St. Clement's Well was a favourite halting-place. The hermit, no doubt, did a roaring trade, and pocketed tips without end. No hermit, indeed, is mentioned in any historical record, but it is a tradition among antiquaries that as far back as the Saxon Kings there was a religious house on the spot, which would be quite in accordance with the custom of those far-off days, when every well of note was dedicated to some saint, in whose honour a chapel was raised by the side of it.

Going still farther west, there was the important hermitage of Charing Cross. On Aggas's map is shown a small house, occupying the spot where the equestrian statue of Charles I. now stands, and where originally



stood Queen Eleanor's Cross. This, by some writers on London, is supposed to represent the hermitage; but, if so, it gives a false idea of what that hermitage really was as to size, and also as to its position. For, according to some authorities consulted so long ago that we cannot now remember them, and failing to have kept reference to them cannot speak positively, the hermitage was situated somewhere about the spot where the post-office is now; nor can the building have been a very small one, since William de Radnor, Bishop of Llandaff, in 1263, had permission from the King to lodge with all his retainers within the precincts of the hermitage at Charing whenever he came to London. The chapel was dedicated to St. Catharine. Curiously enough, in Van den Wyngaerde's View of London in 1543 the hermitage is not shown at all—at least, there is no building in front of the cross.

Between York Street and Charles Street, Tothill Fields, there was, till swept away by the alterations caused by the building of the St. James's Park station of the Underground Railway, a labyrinth of small streets, one of which was known as Hermit's Hill. We may assume the name to have been derived from a hermitage which once stood there; for, according to the very ingenious speculation of a writer in the *Builder*, the spot was one sacred to the Briton, the Roman, and the Saxon. Tothill is supposed to be derived from the god Thoth of the Egyptians; Hermes is the Greek representative of Thoth, as is the Teut of the Saxons. Hermit is in this case evidently derived from Hermes. What more probable than that a cell or hermitage should be erected on such a spot?

Turning our steps to the north, we meet with a hermitage founded in 1511 on land belonging to the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem, by one Robert Baker, a hermit of the Order of St. Paul. The land was known as Woodmansfold, and situate near the northern end of the Goswell Road, and a cross stood in the highway 'at the end of the town of Iseldon.' The hermitage was known as the Hermitage of St. John, and the field in which it stood, and two others adjacent, were collectively known as the Eremitage Fields. They comprised eleven acres within one enclosure. Richard Cloudesley was a great benefactor to it, bequeathing to it lands and tenements, 'that he might be prayed for perpetually' by the then hermit and his successors. The dissolution of religious houses under Henry VIII. caused the hermitage and its appurtenances to fall into lay hands. It was afterwards purchased by Lady Owen, who early in the seventeenth century erected thereon schools and almshouses.

Going still farther north, we reach Highgate. This locality was at an early date occupied by the Normans, and Odo, Bishop of Bayeux and Earl of Kent, probably was its first owner. He had a park there, and the first hermit who raised his cell near one of the park gates probably was the gatekeeper. From various records we know that in those days hermits were collectors of tolls; many paviage grants, or licences to collect tolls for the repair of roads, were directed 'To our well-beloved A. B., the hermit.' Fuller speaks of a 'nameless hermit' dwelling in the hermitage where now stands Highgate School, who at his own cost caused gravel to

be dug in the top of Highgate Hill, and therewith made a causeway from Highgate to Islington. Edward III. granted to William Phelippe the right to levy tolls from all persons passing along the Highgate Road, for every cart shod with iron, laden with merchandise, by the week, twopence; for every cart not shod with iron, by the week, one penny; and for every horse carrying merchandise, by the week, one farthing. The mending of highways was in those days deemed an act of great public charity; and, no doubt, William Phelippe was Fuller's 'nameless hermit.' From the fact of hermits frequently undertaking the task, we may understand how they were found living upon bridges and by the sides of roads, and being toll-gatherers. The gift of the Highgate hermitage eventually came to be in the Bishop of London. In 1386 Bishop Braybrooke gave to William Lichfield, a poor hermit, the office of keeping the chapel at Highgate. In 1531 William Foote was hermit, and probably the last, as in 1565 Queen Elizabeth granted the chapel to Sir Richard Cholmeley, who in 1578 built an entirely new chapel. The hermitage dated probably from the twelfth century, and was dedicated to St. Michael, the patron saint of mountains, and the spot on which it was founded certainly was one of the wildest then to be found in the neighbourhood of London—the summit of a steep hill, miles distant from any church, and to which there was no road; but such were the sites usually chosen by hermits.

Let us conclude this chapter with brief notices of two pseudo-hermits.

On December 28, 1802, one Samuel Matthews was

murdered in Dulwich Wood. This man had been a jobbing gardener, and having lost his wife, of whom he had been exceedingly fond, he was so affected by it that he determined to quit, as much as a working man could do so, all social intercourse. For that purpose he obtained permission from the Master of Dulwich College to dig a cave, and erect in front of it a hut on that part of the manor abutting in the rear on the College Wood and in front on Sydenham Common. Here he lived, when in 1798 he was assailed by a gang of gipsies, by whom he was robbed and cruelly beaten, and left with a broken arm, almost lifeless. During his cure he lived in lodgings at Dulwich, but afterwards returned to his cave, which he repaired, and there he remained till the day of his death, except when following his vocation, or fetching food from adjacent villages. In summer time numerous persons paid visits to the 'Wild Man of the Wood,' and always found him, instead of wild, gentle and unassuming in his manners. At the time of his death he was about seventy years of age. A reward of £25 was offered by the Camberwell authorities for the apprehension of the party or parties guilty of the murder, but they were never discovered. In 1809 a man named Isaac Evans, well known about Sydenham by the nickname of Wrynecked Isaac, who died in Lewisham Workhouse, acknowledged himself to have been one of those who murdered Matthews.

Grub Street, once the haunt of poor authors, now called Milton Street, in the seventeenth century harboured a strange hermit, Henry Welby, Esq. He was a native of Lincolnshire, where he had an estate of

more than £1,000 per annum. He was eminently a gentleman, having been at the University and the Inns of Court; he also made the tour of Europe. When he was about forty years of age, his brother, an abandoned profligate, made an attempt on his life with a pistol, which not going off, he wrested it from his hands, and found it charged with two bullets. Hence he formed a resolution of retiring from the world, and taking a house in Grub Street, he reserved three rooms for himself: the first for his diet, the second for his lodging, and the third for his study. In these he kept himself so shut up that for forty-four years he was never seen by any human being excepting an old female servant, and then only when urgently necessary. His diet was bread, water-gruel, milk, and vegetables; the yolk of an egg was an occasional luxury. His time was spent in reading—he bought all the new books that were published, rejecting most—meditation, and prayer. His plain garb, his long and silver beard, his mortified aspect, bespoke him an ancient dweller in the desert rather than in a populous city. He expended a great part of his income in acts of charity. He died in October, 1636, and was buried in St. Giles's Church, Cripplegate. His old servant died six days before him. He had a daughter, married to a Yorkshire gentleman, but neither she nor any of her family ever saw her father after his retirement. A rare quarto tract exists, entitled 'The Phoenix of these Late Times,' dated 1637, showing 'the first occasion and reasons' of Welby's seclusion, with epitaphs and elegies, and a full-length portrait of Welby, by W. Marshall. A fancy portrait, as we suppose, of him was published in 1794. It is

not a reproduction of the 1637 portrait, because in that boys are shown flying kites in the fields adjoining the house, whereas in the 1794 print a man and a dog, a pedlar with his pack, and a man in a boat, with a church in the distance, are visible through the window.



## IX.

### EXTINCT AND OBSOLETE TRADES OF OLD LONDON.

**M**ANY of the trades and industries anciently carried on in London survive to our day ; some, through change of fashion, improved modes of procedure, or mere senile decay, have altogether vanished, and their very names are forgotten, and possibly unintelligible when remembered, without an explanation appended thereto.

The conditions under which trades and crafts were formerly carried on were very different from those which now prevail. Boys were then apprenticed to a trade or industry which was usually pursued by one individual master in his own house ; the apprentices were under his care and control, and he personally instructed them. And though there was much in the system which testified to narrow-mindedness and prejudice against progressive ideas and practices, though much time was lost and energy wasted through the want of labour-saving methods and appliances, the work turned out was generally honest, serviceable, and durable. And the apprentices learnt their craft thoroughly, became

really masters of its 'mystery,' as it was, and I believe is still, called in apprenticeship indentures. By 'mystery,' when thus used with reference to trade, is not meant a secret, but the *mestier*, the mastery of the theory and practice of the trade or craft. At the present day the personal intercourse between the master and the apprentice has ceased, the master more often than not being represented by a big company, or a board of directors; and fewer boys are now apprenticed, the trades-unions, for their own selfish but suicidal ends, opposing the practice, whilst boys and youths only too readily agree with educational cranks that a handicraft can be attained by attendance at evening schools, in an easy, comfortable, and 'genteel' manner, and are satisfied with the superficial smattering they thus acquire—conditions and delusions which are gradually driving industrial pursuits out of England, which once was the workshop of the world, especially for superior work. But employers cannot now get the skilled workmen of former times.

The supply of genuine articles by tradespeople to the public was well looked after in ancient times, and its infringement severely punished. In the City Records we constantly read of punishment being inflicted on fraudulent traders and workmen, usually standing in the pillory, or being drawn through the streets on a hurdle—a punishment especially awarded to bakers selling bad or under-weight bread—or forfeiture of the goods. Thus a large quantity of gloves and braels (braces) were publicly burnt in Cheapside on March 12, 1350, they being 'false and vamped up in a false fashion, in deceit of the people, and to the scandal of all the trade.' On

January 13, 1351, a cook was set in the pillory for selling a putrid capon; on November 6, 1380, a man was similarly punished for selling sacks of charcoal short of weight, the sacks being burnt under his nose while he stood in the pillory. On May 31, 1381, a poulterer was placed in the pillory for exposing putrid pigeons for sale, which also were burnt under him whilst he suffered his punishment. Numerous other instances might be quoted, but these will serve as specimens. Badly-made nets used for fishing in the Thames were always burnt; I find no fewer than eight instances of such burnings recorded within eighty years.

Trade regulations were very stringent, and often oppressive. Thus, in the reign of Richard II. and long after, all wool entering London had to be weighed at the common beam, which stood in the churchyard of St. Mary Woolnoth, a fee being payable on every parcel. Even in Stow's time (end of sixteenth century) there was a place in Cornhill, called the Wey House, where merchandise brought from beyond the seas had to be weighed, for which purpose the master of the house had porters, and a strong cart and four great horses, to draw and carry the goods from the merchants' houses to the beam and back again. How many carts and horses would it take now to draw to and fro the merchandise brought from beyond the seas? Then, certain trades were restricted to certain localities, though this regulation could never be strictly enforced. Traders, however, had their favourite localities, as even now. The brewers stuck close to the Thames, because the river was not then, as it is now, a dirty sewer, but a pellucid stream. Certainly, no brewer now would

dare to proclaim that he drew his water direct from the Thames.

But it is time to come to the specific topic of this chapter—ancient trades and industries.

Thus, there were feathermongers, who reared poultry for their feathers, which, however, were only used for the cushions and beds of the more wealthy. In the thirteenth and following centuries the middle and humbler classes slept on straw, on which was thrown a whitel or blanket. An olden proverb then said: ‘Whoso stretcheth his foot further than the whitel will reach, he shall stretch in the straw.’

Wymplers were the makers of wimples, or neck-coverings for the women; they formed a distinguishing part of a nun’s dress.

Marbrers and tableters probably were sculptors of marble and makers of tablets. Fanners probably were makers of fans for winnowing corn. A gorgiarius, perhaps, was a maker of gorgets or armour for the throat; or possibly a wympler, who, as above mentioned, made wimples for covering the ‘gorge’ or throat. A shearman was a shearer of the nap of cloth; a shere-monier was a man who cut and rounded the plates to be coined into sterling pence or other coin of the realm. Paternosterers, as their name implied, were the makers of prayer-beads, for the use chiefly of worshippers at St. Paul’s. A bokeler was a buckle-maker, and a callere a maker of calls, or cloaks, or coifs for the head. A flaoner probably was a maker of flauns, or custards, or light cakes. A ferron (from the French *fer*) meant an ironmonger, and a brochere a spitmaker, from the French *broche*. A grossarius was a wholesale dealer,

especially in spices, whence our modern grocer. Whittawyers, officially called 'megniers' (the old French word for dressers of white leather, the modern French for which is *mégissier*), were, as the English term indicates, preparers of white leather, tawyers being dressers of skins in general, who were also called pellipers and pelterers (of course, from the French *peler*). With them must not be confounded the phelipers, or fripperers, who bought old clothes or budge (lamb's fur) or other furred phelperye (frippery), and who, on reselling such articles, were bound to inform the buyer that they were second-hand goods, though they might be made to look like new. Malemongers were sellers of males, now called mails, or travelling-bags, evidently from the French *malle*. A kissere was a maker of cushes or armour for the thighs. The word 'cush' was a corruption of the French *cuisse*, and as this in its pronunciation much resembles the English word 'kiss,' and evidently was so pronounced in England, we thence get the explanation of the word 'kissere.' Arbalesters were makers of arbalests or crossbows, stringers were bow-string makers, and bowyers and fletchers (from the French *flèche*) bow and arrow makers. A stockfishmonger of course dealt in that article, which seems in the fourteenth and following centuries to have been a trade by itself. William Walworth had been apprentice to John Lovekyn, a stockfishmonger. When Walworth retired from the Aldermanship, which, according to regulations then existing, he could hold for two years only in succession, he was succeeded by Edmund Oliver, another stockfishmonger.

Lorimers (often spelt 'loriners') were makers of bits,

spurs, and other small iron and brass work ; they were therefore divided into lorimers in copper or brass and lorimers in iron. It appears that in the reign of Edward III. the saddlers, 'by conspiracy and collusion among themselves,' had made oath that no lorimer should sell any of the articles made by him to freemen of the City, or to any other persons, but only to themselves, the saddlers ; and as the lorimers naturally objected to such a restriction, the saddlers 'maliciously and by force of arms assailed the lorimers as well in their own houses as in the high streets, some persons whereof were killed, some maimed, and many maltreated.' This led to a lawsuit, which was settled by the saddlers repudiating all idea of such a conspiracy against the lorimers, and consenting, in case of their acting contrary to such agreement, to pay ten tuns of wine to the commonalty of London. There was nothing said about compensation to the poor lorimers.

The spurriers seem to have been a separate branch of the lorimer's trade, and a bad lot in the time of Edward III. ; for, in 1345, the following was recorded against them : 'No one of the trade of spurriers shall work longer than from the beginning of the day until curfew, by reason that no man can work so neatly by night as by day. And many persons of the said trade, who compass how to practise deception in their work, desire to work by night rather than by day ; and then they introduce false iron, and iron that has been cracked, for tin, and also they put gilt on false copper and cracked. And, further, many of the said trade are wandering about all day, without working at their trade ; and then, when they have become drunk and frantic,



they take to their work, to the annoyance of the sick and of all their neighbours, as well as by reason of the broils that arise between them and the strange folk (persons not of their trade) who are dwelling among them. And then they blow up their fires so vigorously that their forges begin all at once to blaze, to the great peril of themselves and of all the neighbourhood around. And then the neighbours are much in dread of the sparks which issue forth from the chimneys of their forges. By reason whereof all working at night shall cease. And any person in the said trade acting to the contrary hereof shall be amerced the first time in 40<sup>d</sup>, the second time in half a mark, and the third time in 10<sup>s</sup>, and the fourth time he shall forswear the trade for ever.' It was ordered at the same time 'that no one shall cause to be sold any manner of old spurs for new ones; that no one in the said trade shall take an apprentice for less than seven years; that no one of the said trade shall work on Saturdays after none has been rung out in the City, and not from that hour until the following Monday morning.' None was the ninth hour of the day, that is to say, three o'clock, or thereabouts, in the afternoon, so that the Saturday half-holiday is a very ancient institution.

Heaumers were helmet makers. They also seem to have been full of tricks in their dealings with the public, for in 1347 it is recorded of them: 'Forasmuch as heretofore some persons coming in, who are strangers, have intermeddled, and still do intermeddle, in the making of helmetry, whereas they do not know their trade, by reason whereof many great men and others of the realm have been slain through their default, to the

great scandal of their trade, it is ordained that from henceforth no person shall intermeddle with, or work at, helmetry, if he be not proved to be a good, proper, and sufficient workman by the Wardens of the said trade . . . that helmetry and other arms forged with the hammer, which are brought from foreign parts unto the said City for sale, shall not be offered for sale, privately or openly, until they have been properly assayed by the said Wardens . . . that each of the makers shall have his own sign or mark, and that no one shall counterfeit the sign or mark of another.'

Hurers were the makers of hures, or shaggy caps, and, insignificant as their trade appears, it gave the authorities a great deal of trouble. In 1376 the fullers appealed to the Mayor and Aldermen of London to stop the hurers from fulling their caps in the mills of Wandsworth, Old Ford, Stratford, and Enfield, where the fullers fullled their cloths, because the caps when mixed with the cloths crush and tear the latter. In the same year the hurers themselves appealed against the practice of fulling caps in mills—it seems that the hurers, being prohibited from fulling at the above-named mills, had erected a mill of their own—which rendered caps less serviceable than when fullled by hand, by persons skilled in the trade, and fulling at mills rendered many of these latter worthless. Their prayer was granted. In 1391 a hurer was had up for selling hures 'false and deceitfully made,' and the experts asked to give their opinions thereon said they were oiled with grease that was rank and putrid, by reason whereof they stank, and that they had been fullled under the feet, which they ought not to be, but only by hand. Wherefore the cappes or hures

were burnt in Chepe, and the maker of them fined twenty shillings. In 1398 the hurers were forbidden from scouring cappes or hures in any open place: they were to do this in their own houses. For it appears that some persons in the trade sent their apprentices and journeymen, as well as children of tender age, down to the Thames and other exposed places, amid horrible tempests, frosts, and snows, and that pages belonging to lords, when they took their horses down to the rivers, fell to wrangling with the said apprentices and workmen, and often were on the point of killing one another. In 1404 the hurers were again petitioners against members of their own trade fulling at mills, or by foot, and making cappes with pelwolle, or inferior wool taken from dead sheep, or with coursewolle, or flocks, and dyeing the same scarlet, whereas, as the petitioners asserted, such work was not able to bear that colour, 'in great deceit of all the common people, and to the great prejudice of the custom of our Lord the King.' In consequence of this petition the Wardens of the trade were empowered to make search for such inferior articles, and to inflict heavy fines. In 1418 one Thomas Taillour, citizen and hurer of London, was fined 6s. 8d. for fulling caps at a mill; the caps were declared to be forfeited, and Taillour was committed in custody until he should have satisfied the commonalty as to the sum of 6s. 8d.

Barbers in those days of long ago were surgeons too; but many unqualified persons crept into the profession—a fact which, in 1376, called forth the following ordinance: 'Whereas from one day to another there resort men who are barbers from "uppeland" (country

places) unto the City of London, who are not instructed in their craft, and intermeddle with barbery, surgery, and the cure of other maladies, while they know not how to do such things . . . to the great scandal of all the good barbers of the said City, therefore the said good folks, the barbers, do pray that it may please your honourable Lordships, for the love of God, and as a work of charity, to ordain that from henceforth no such stranger coming from uppeland or from any other place shall keep shop for barbery within the said City, before he shall be found able and skilled in the said art and office of barbery ; and the Wardens of the craft shall inspect the instruments of the said art, to see that they are good and proper for the service of the people, by reason of the great peril that might ensue thereupon.' And, says the record, the same was granted unto them. When will the public be enlightened enough to do away with barbers altogether, by giving up the stupid and disgusting habit of shaving or being shaved? In the last century people were mad enough to have their heads shaved and wear wigs ; well, in this century people came to their senses and wore their own hair. Will the next century see as total a revulsion against shaving?

Latoners, who evidently derived their name from the French *laiton* (brass), were workers in that metal. Forcermakers were makers of forcers, or coffers, or boxes. In 1406 they petitioned the Mayor and Aldermen against 'divers folks of the same trade who made forcers of false and rotten wood, and covered them with linen-cloth within, and sent them to dealers to sell again to other lieges of the realm, to the scandal of the good

folks of the said trade. And they also petitioned that forcers should continue to be made according to the standard used from of old; that is to say, of nine different dimensions in length, breadth, and depth within. And that they, the forcermakers, should have power to appoint two Wardens to examine the work offered for sale.' Whether their petition was agreed to we do not find on record.

A chaucer meant a shoemaker, from the French *chausse*, stocking, or hose. In the early records of the City the appellation chaucer is frequently met with. Between the years 1281 and 1403 it occurs eighteen times, but whether employed as a surname inherited from a father or more remote ancestor, or merely as the designation of its owner's trade, is now doubtful. As the name of one of our early poets, it is invested with a particular interest. Richard le Chaucer, repeatedly mentioned in the list referred to above, and apparently a vintner, probably was the father of Geoffrey Chaucer, and seems to have been a man of substance; so that to connect the poet with the trade of shoemaking, whilst somewhat *infra dig.*—though the craft has produced poets like Hans Sachs and Bloomfield, besides the marvellously gifted mystic Jacob Böhme—seems also unwarranted by the condition of his parents. In a discussion recently carried on in the *Athenæum*, an endeavour is made to show that Chaucer is a corruption of *chaufecire*, which has been Anglicized into chaffwax or chafewax; from which it is inferred that one of the poet's ancestors may have held that office, and thus given the name to the family. Yet the fact that two of the Chaucers, referred to above, lived

in Cordwainer or Shoemaker Street (now Bow Lane) seems an argument in favour of their connection with the trade. But, like many similar inquiries, this one is merely curious, and unimportant whichever way it is decided.

Some of the foregoing trades have disappeared altogether, others still exist under altered names; thus cordwainers still exist as shoemakers, and it is probable that thousands of them would not be able to tell whence came the old name; but this very name is an historical indication that the leather used for the finer sort of shoes came from Cordova. Heaumers and arbalesters and stringers remind us of means of offence and defence now useless, and therefore no longer made. Thus trades and crafts die out, to be replaced by others. In our time two foreign importations seem to have left us—the Black Forest clock-dealer, who used to perambulate the streets and indicate his approach by making his clock strike, and the German buy-a-broom girl: what has become of her? Well, we can spare her. But where, also, is the indigenous ‘Ol’ Clo’’ Jew? Has he retired on a fortune? or has he gone to the Transvaal to make one?



## X.

### ROUND ABOUT BLACKFRIARS OF THE PAST.

NO locality in London is richer in historical associations than are the precincts of the former priory of Blackfriars and the streets and lanes around them. Taking the distance, say, between Puddle Dock to the east, and the new buildings adjoining the hotel at the corner of Bridge Street to the west for our southern base-line, and starting from the western corner northward to Bride Lane, crossing Bridge Street diagonally, ascending Pilgrim Street to the Broadway, turning east through Shoemaker Row and Carter Street, and then southwards through Addle Hill down to the river, we shall within that area comprise some of the most important buildings and events recorded in our national annals. To almost every yard of ground we may, so to speak, attach an historical label.

The locality we are about to describe, as far as the part lying to the east of the ancient Fleet River is concerned, is situate in Baynard Castle and Farringdon Within Wards. We begin with the building which gave name to one of the Wards, namely Baynard's Castle. Hollar's view of this castle—not the original,

but the second, built after the fire of 1428—shows us a gloomy, frowning building, its walls coming right to the water's edge, with a landing-stage to the chief entrance. The façade fronting the river had a round tower at the western end, besides two hexagonal ones, one at the eastern end and the other near the round tower. There were other hexagonal towers on the land side. The property belonging to the lords of Baynard's Castle extended from St. Paul's down to the river Thames, comprising the whole parish of St. Andrew, and the palace was of such a size that Richard, Duke of York, at a meeting of the great estates of the kingdom in 1547, found lodging in it with his four hundred retainers.

In Saxon times a royal palace occupied the locality. It is supposed to have been built by Athelstan, and Addle Hill is assumed to derive its name from that King. The palace fronted the river Thames, and it was from its windows that the body of Edin, the murderer of Edmund Ironside, was thrown into the Thames. The palace was destroyed by fire in 1087, and never rebuilt. Its site and the ground belonging to it were in Norman times divided between William Baynard and Eustace, Earl of Bologne. Ralph Baynard erected a castle on the former site of Athelstan's palace, and gave it his name. He left it to his grandson, Henry Baynard, who forfeited it to the Crown in 1111 for taking part with Helias, Earl of Mayne, who endeavoured to deprive Henry I. of his Norman possessions. The King bestowed the barony and castle, which carried with it the dignities of castellan and standard-bearer of the City, on Robert Fitz-Richard, grandson

of Gilbert, Earl of Clare, and from him it descended to his grandson Robert, who had a daughter named Matilda, whom the King (John) endeavoured to seduce by fair means or foul; but finding both her and her father firm in their resistance, he accused Robert of being a confederate of the discontented barons, and tried to secure his person; Robert, however, made his escape to France, and the King vented his anger by the demolition of Baynard's Castle and two other houses belonging to Robert; and on Matilda he avenged himself for her refusal to listen to his suit by having her killed by means of a poisoned egg. King John being in France in 1214, Robert, who was there also, regained the King's favour by an extraordinary act of bravery. He was allowed to rebuild Baynard's Castle and his other houses, and was made Governor of Hertford Castle. But he could not forget his daughter's murder. This, and the King's arbitrary conduct in general, led him to become the leader of the patriotic men who on the field of Runnymede extorted from John the great Charter of English liberties. In the reign of Henry VI. (1422-1461) the male branch of the lords of Baynard's Castle became extinct, and Anne, the daughter and heiress, married into the Ratcliffe family, in which the title of Fitz-Walker was revived. It is not known how the castle came to the Crown, but when, in 1428, it was entirely consumed by fire, it was rebuilt by Humphrey, the 'Protector of the Realm of England.' On the latter's death, Henry VI. made the castle a royal residence, and granted it to Richard, Duke of York. In 1460 the Earls of March and Warwick entered London at the head of a large body

of men. The Earl of March, son of the Duke of York, took up his abode in Baynard's Castle, and was there proclaimed King as Edward IV., Henry VI. being dethroned. One of his first and most arbitrary acts was causing Walter Walker, a wealthy grocer of Cheapside, to be apprehended and tried for having in a jocular manner said that he would make his son 'heir to the Crown,' meaning thereby his own house, which bore that sign, and for this imaginary crime Walker was beheaded in Smithfield on the eighth day of the new King's reign. Where were the spirit and independence of Englishmen then? It was in Baynard's Castle that Richard of Gloucester, in 1483, with apparent reluctance accepted the Crown. Henry VIII. expended large sums in repairing and beautifying the castle, which he changed from a fortress to a palace, in which he frequently lodged, and whence he made several solemn processions. In 1505 he there entertained Philip of Austria, King of Castile, who had been driven to England by a tempest. In 1553 the Council, acting after the death of Edward VI. in co-operation with the Mayor and Aldermen of the City, set out from Baynard's Castle to Cheapside, where they proclaimed Mary, daughter of Henry VIII., Queen of England. Poor Lady Jane Grey, on whom the Crown had been forced by Northumberland, was executed within three days of Mary's accession. Baynard's Castle was then the property of William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, whom Queen Elizabeth visited there. The last inhabitants were the Earls of Shrewsbury, who resided there till the castle was burnt in the Great Fire of 1666. Two towers remained standing, and were not pulled down

till early in this century. On its site are now the Carron Ironworks and other factories, and Castle Street and Castle Yard close by commemorate Baynard's.

Adjoining Baynard's Castle once stood a tower, built by Edward II. Edward III., in the second year of his reign, gave it to William de Ros, of Hamslake, in Yorkshire, 'for a rose yearly, to be paid for all service due.' In 1468 it was called the Legate's Inn, or Tower. It was taken down by order of John Shaw, Mayor, in 1502.

A third tower which stood by the river-side, at the corner of Blackfriars, next to the junction of the present Blackfriars Bridge and Queen Victoria Street, where the railway-station now is situate, was the Castle of Montfitchet, also called Mountfiquet. It was built by a baron of that name, who came over with William the Conqueror. A portion of Lincoln's Inn Fields was originally called Fitchett's Field, and Hugh de Burgh, who in the thirteenth century owned Montfitchet Castle, had purchased from John Bokointe, a citizen of London, a plot of land with the buildings on it, *juxta Holbourn*, afterwards called Fitchett's Field, which he assigned to the Black Friars for their residence. When the monks migrated from Lincoln's Inn Fields, he gave them his Castle of Montfitchet. We may therefore assume that both the Lincoln's Inn and Blackfriars sites belonged to one and the same owner.\* The Montfitchets, indeed, seem to have been partial to friars. Richard de Montfitchet founded a religious house for Benedictines at Stanstead-Mountfitchett, in Essex; it was called Threw-

\* See my 'History of Lincoln's Inn Fields.'

hall Priory, and a portion of it still stands as a private residence. The stones of Montfitchet's castle were used partly in the building of the church of Blackfriars, and in the repair of St. Paul's Cathedral.

Besides the above buildings there were a great many houses of note. There were on Paul's Wharf-hill tenements which in the leases from the Dean and Chapter were called *Camera Dianæ*, from a spacious building which preceded the tenements in the time of Henry II. In this *Camera*, a vaulted structure, full of intricate ways and windings, this Henry II. is reported to have kept his favourite mistress, as he did at Woodstock, where he called her *Rosa mundi*, whilst here he called her *Diana*. Near Paul's Wharf also stood Beaumont Inn, belonging to a noble family of that name. On the attainder of Lord Bardolph, Edward IV. bestowed the mansion on his favourite, Lord Hastings. From him it descended to the noble family of Huntingdon, after whom it was subsequently named. Near Trigg Stairs, at the bottom of Trigg Lane, the Abbot of Chertsey had his mansion, afterwards called Sandys House, from the nobleman of that name who became possessor of it. West of Paul's Wharf was Scroope's Inn, the town residence of that noble family in the time of Henry VI. ; and near that was a house belonging to the alien abbey of Fescamp, given by Edward III. to Sir Thomas Burley, after whom it was called Burley House. In Carter Lane was the mansion of the Priors of Okeborne, in Wiltshire. This was afterwards given by Henry VI. to King's College, Cambridge. Not far from Puddle Dock stood an ancient house of marble and other stone, built by the Lords of Berkeley, which in the reign of



Henry VI. was the residence of the famous Richard Beauchamp, the King-making Earl of Warwick. In Thames Street stood Le Neve House, formerly belonging to John de Montague, Earl of Salisbury, and afterwards to John de Beauchamp, knight, and lastly to Sir Thomas Erpingham, knight, of Erpingham in Norfolk, Warden of the Cinque Ports.

Another notable building in the Blackfriars was the King's Wardrobe, which was built by the Sir John Beauchamp above-named. His executors sold it to Edward III., who converted it into the office of the Master of the Wardrobe, or the repository for the royal clothes, which must in time have assumed the proportions and the aspect of an aristocratic rag-fair. James gave these 'ol' clo'' to the Earl of Dunbar, by whom they were sold, and no doubt very profitably, for there were royalty-hunting mobs in those days who could go into raptures over the King's breeches or Her Majesty's hose as well as in our own day. The Wardrobe was destroyed in the Great Fire; the office was removed to the Savoy, and afterwards to Buckingham Street, Strand, and finally abolished in 1709. The Church of St. Andrew, originally called 'juxta Baynard's Castle,' when the Wardrobe was built in 1300, took the cognomen of St. Andrew Wardrobe.

Shakespeare had a house here, which he left to his favourite daughter, Susannah, in the following words: 'I give, will, bequeath, and devise unto my daughter Susannah Hall, all that messuage or tenement with the appurtenances, wherein one John Robinson dwelleth, situat, lying, and being in the Blackfriars in London, nere the Wardrobe.' We shall presently see Shake-

speare's connection with the locality. Edward Alleyn, the founder of Dulwich College, built six tenements of timber on new foundations in Swan Alley, near the Wardrobe. Swan Alley commemorated the cognizance of the Beauchamp family; it has entirely disappeared from the London map.

A building stood in this locality, of which the following is the only information we possess: 'Memor. that I, William Alman, mercer, builded my house in the Blackfriars' Wall, yet is now called the Common Hall, in year of Christ's incarnation, 1536.' This memorandum is in an old service book in the Bodleian Library; in the upper portion of the page from which it is taken there are some family notices: Cicely married to William Alman, 1532; with the births of two daughters and a son, 1533-35. The memorandum was first published in Dr. Howard's 'Miscellanea Genealogica,' 1868.

In Carter Lane stood the old Bell Inn, whence, in 1598, Richard Quynen directed a letter to Mr. William Shakespeare, 'My loving good friend and countryman.' It is the only letter to Shakespeare known to exist. A new Bell Inn preserves the memory of its predecessor.

But the finest and largest building on the eastern side of the Fleet was the monastery of the Black Friars or Dominicans. It occupied, with its outbuildings, all the ground between the Thames and the City Wall parallel with Ludgate Hill, and to the east it comprised the present Water Lane and adjacent alleys and lanes. The Dominicans first came to England in 1221, and took up their abode, in token of humility, in Stinking Lane in Newgate Street, amidst the Shambles,

whence the lane took its name. They were, however, soon enabled, as we have seen, by the liberality of Hugh de Burgh, to remove to the site of the present Lincoln's Inn, and in 1276 they again removed to the locality to which they gave the name of Blackfriars. The site of the new priory and church was held of the Grand Prior of the Knights Templars, as chief lord of the fee. Edward I. ordered the City wall from Ludgate to the Thames to be pulled down and rebuilt, so as to include the convent within its shelter. At the bend of the wall, where the railway-station now stands, 'a certain good and comely tower,' for the reception of His Majesty when he condescended to visit the City, was ordered to be built. Edward I. and his Queen were great benefactors to the monastery, but it was with difficulty that he obtained from the Bishop, Dean, and Chapter of London leave to erect a church within its precincts. The Priory church, when built, was a spacious and richly ornamented fabric, in which, at a subsequent period, many Parliaments and other great assemblies were held. In 1450 Henry VI. commenced the Parliament at Westminster, adjourned it to Blackfriars, and thence to Leicester. In 1522 Henry VIII., in great haste, renovated the palace of Bridewell on the west side of the Fleet, for the reception of Charles V. of France, but the King preferred lodging with the Dominicans, whilst his retinue was installed in Bridewell. In 1524 a Parliament was commenced at Blackfriars, when a subsidy of £800,000 was demanded to be raised on goods and lands at 4s. in the £; which was lowered, and granted at 2s. in the £, upon the goods and lands of those who were worth £20, or

might expend as much annually. This Parliament was adjourned to Westminster among the Black Monks, and ended in the King's palace, in consequence of which it was called the Black Parliament. In 1529 Cardinal Campeggio, the legate, with Cardinal Wolsey, sat at the Blackfriars to discuss the question of the King's scruples concerning the lawfulness of his marriage with Queen Katherine, of whom the King had got tired. The issue is well known. In the same year, in the month of October, a Parliament was held at Blackfriars, which settled Cardinal Wolsey's fate, also too well known, and too much connected with the general history of England to need recapitulation here. And then came the blow on the House itself; the Black Friars had gradually fallen into the vices which beset the brethren of other monasteries, and so Henry VIII. seemed to be performing a virtuous act in suppressing the monastery and confiscating its property. In 1551 Edward VI. granted the whole house, site, circuit, and precinct, amounting to the yearly value of £19—what is all this worth now?—to Sir Thomas Cawarden, Master of the Revels; but the hall and the site of the prior's apartments within the precinct had been sold in 1547 to Sir Francis Brian, at the yearly value of 40s. On the dissolution of the monastery, and the closing of its church, the parishioners had been deprived of their place of worship, and in consequence of their complaints, it was decided that Sir Thomas Cawarden was obliged to provide a church; he allotted them a large chamber in the priory, which fell down in 1597. Then the parishioners built a new church by subscription, which, in consequence of the increase of the

population, had to be enlarged in 1613 by the purchase of a piece of ground from Sir George Moore. This church perished in the general conflagration in 1666, and the parish it had served was united to that of St. Andrew Wardrobe.

The Nemesis of Time brings about strange revenges ; the spot which was erst the stronghold of robbers, who despoiled peaceful citizens by military ruffianism, and afterwards of ecclesiastical cheats and deceivers, who robbed on even a larger scale by the practice of superstitious terrors, in the seventeenth century became a printing-office—the King's—for proclamations and other Government publications. The press, more powerful than the sword or the rosary, has altered all the conditions of mankind for the better. Claude Frollo was right when, in the old Notre Dame tower, he said, pointing to a book, 'This shall destroy that.'

The Basket family first held the patent of the King's printers. Their patent expired in January, 1770, and from them it passed into the hands of Charles Eyre, of Clapham, and of William Strahan, an eminent printer of New Street, Shoe Lane, who removed the business to a large building they had erected near the house of the latter, close to Gough Square, Fleet Street, where the business is still carried on. While the King's printer was at Blackfriars the printing-house, 'the finest building of the kind in the whole world,' says one historian, was burnt down on January 14, 1737-8, by a fire which began in Mr. Basket's kitchen, and spread with such rapidity that the family escaped with the greatest difficulty, Mr. Basket himself escaping into the street in his shirt only. His loss in types, materials, stock-in-trade,

etc., amounted to upwards of £20,000. The King's printing-house finally became that of the *Times* newspaper, and a greater contrast than this implies between the uses to which the site, memorable for so many reasons, on which it stands was put in the past, and that to which it is now put, can scarcely be imagined. There the theory of Basil Valentine's 'Curus triumphalis Antimonii' is practically realized in a truly triumphant manner, a triumph greater than any ever accorded to Roman conqueror, and daily renewed!

There is south of Carter Street, running parallel with it, and starting from the now disused burial-ground of St. Anne's, a passage, a cul-de-sac, called Tennis Court. This indicates the site of a tennis-court which formerly existed there. Before then a tennis-court had existed actually within the walls of the ancient parish church of St. Anne, more or less of the area which was afterwards converted into Shakespeare's playhouse. This tennis-court was suppressed by Philip and Mary, in consequence of which Queen Elizabeth, in 1560, granted to Richard Ffrythe for his life leave to erect a new tennis-court on the site now commemorated by the court of that name, which belonged to the Sir Thomas Cawarden already mentioned. That the name of this place of amusement has survived to this day shows how popular it must have been. But a more memorable one was to arise shortly after in the same locality. We have already referred to Shakespeare's connection with Blackfriars. It appears that the Mayor and Aldermen of London made every effort to drive players out of the City, in consequence of which Richard Burbage, afterwards the friend and fellow-actor of Shakespeare, Henry



Knox, and others, had erected, in 1578, a theatre in Blackfriars on the site still known as Playhouse Yard, the City authorities having no jurisdiction over the premises of the former monastery of Blackfriars. In 1594, Knox, who it seems held the lease, surrendered it to Shakespeare's company, when the Lord Mayor and Aldermen made a fruitless attempt to close the theatre; but it was successfully shown that they exercised no authority within the liberty of Blackfriars, and therefore were defeated. The Corporation then opened a negotiation for purchase with Burbage, Shakespeare, and the other shareholders, nine in all. The players were worth about £7,000, Shakespeare's share being valued at £1,400 6s 8d., including the wardrobe and properties. The theatre was left derelict, and finally pulled down in 1608, nothing being built on its site.

The Blackfriars company had in 1593 built the Swan Theatre in Southwark, and Shakespeare lived at the Swan Garden in Southwark, so he drove to the Swan. In 1613 he purchased a plot of ground not far from the Blackfriars Theatre, and building on a street leading down to Puddle Wharf. The property was the property he left to his daughter Susannah, on which he had erected the residence occupied by John Robinson. Puddle Dock Hill is under Wandsworth Court.

The Friary premises soon after the dissolution of the monastery became, as we have seen, a somewhat fashionable library, devoted with the house. Lord Herbert, son of William, fourth Earl of Wiltshire, had a house there, which Queen Elizabeth, in 1600, honoured with her presence on the occasion of her marriage with the daughter and heiress of John, Lord Russell, son of

Francis, Earl of Bedford. The Queen was met at the waterside by the bride, and carried to the house in a litter by six knights. The Queen dined there, and then witnessed a memorable masque of eight ladies, and a strange dance newly invented. These eight ladies chose eight ladies more to dance with them ; Her Majesty was one of those so invited, and rose up and danced, though she was then sixty.

In 1623 a fearful accident happened at the chief house in the Friary, Hunsdon House, then occupied by Count de Tillier, the French Ambassador. On October 26, a Roman Catholic congregation of about three hundred persons had assembled in a long garret on the third and uppermost story. During the progress of the service the great weight of the crowd suddenly snapped the main beam of the floor, which instantly crashed in and fell into the room below. The main beams there also snapped, and broke through into the Ambassador's drawing-room. A portion of the garret floor remained standing, and the people on it, having no other means of escape, drew their knives and cut a way through a plaster wall into an adjoining room. The news of the accident quickly spread. To keep out the rabble, all the Blackfriars passages were guarded, and workmen employed to remove the débris and rescue the sufferers still alive. Nearly a hundred persons were killed by the catastrophe ; some had almost miraculous escapes by timbers falling over them obliquely, so as to protect instead of crushing them. Of course the religious intolerance of the times rendered itself very conspicuous on this occasion. The Catholics declared that the Protestants, knowing this to be a chief place of meeting

of men of their faith, had secretly sawn the supporting timbers partly asunder. The Protestants, equally bigoted, asserted that the planks could not bear such a weight of Romish sin and superstition, and that God was displeased with their unholy rites. The event is historically commemorated as the 'Fatal Vespers.'

People of distinction at various times lived in the locality. Jonson resided there when he wrote 'Volpone,' and the scene of 'The Alchymist' is laid at Blackfriars. Vandyke lived there for nine years, and the Earl and Countess of Somerset resided in the same locality, where they poisoned their former favourite, Sir Thomas Overbury. Sir Samuel Luke, who furnished the original of Butler's 'Hudibras,' Sir Anthony Ashley Cooper, afterwards the famous Earl of Shaftesbury, and Isaac Oliver, the unrivalled miniature painter, lived in the Friary.

Burials in the Priory church were very numerous. Stow gives a list of some sixty persons of distinction buried in it, including Queens, Princes, Dukes, and Earls, and their wives, and the smaller fry of Sirs and Esquires too numerous to give even their names. Of course, this meant good business for the monks, for the privilege had to be paid for at a good round sum.

With reference to the remark made above that the City had no jurisdiction over the precincts of Blackfriars, this arose from the fact of the Priory having the right of sanctuary, which was asserted to continue after the suppression of the monastery; but gradually the Lord Mayor and Aldermen encroached on the privilege, and as the general law of the country was more firmly established, and its Acts enforced, the right of sanctuary of itself fell into disuse, and Blackfriars being incor-

porated with the City, sanctuary protection ceased altogether.

We will now cross the river Fleet by the bridge which connects it with the Palace of Bridewell on the opposite bank—which appears, from the imperfect representations extant of it, to have been a covered bridge, almost a house. The precincts of the palace extended from about the present Bride Lane to the north, to the river Thames to the south, forming with its eastern and western sides an extensive parallelogram, according to the maps of Aggas and Wyngaerde, of magnificent buildings, part of them being a castellated mansion abutting on the Thames. The palace took its name from St. Bride's, or St. Bridget's, Well, in that locality, which is still in existence—a pump behind St. Bride's Church now supplying the water. There was in Roman times a fort on the site, and a palace both of the Saxon and Norman Kings. Henry I. (1100-1135) partly rebuilt the palace, and in 1847 a vault with Norman billet moulding was discovered in excavating the site of a house in Bride Lane. The palace was afterwards forsaken by royalty, and remained in a neglected state till Cardinal Wolsey came to live in it; he, after having spent some £22,000 in repairs on it, called it his 'poor house at Bridewell.' On his downfall the palace reverted to the Crown. Henry VIII. rebuilt it in a most magnificent manner for the reception of Charles V., who, however, preferred lodging in the house of the Black Friars opposite. A temporary bridge passing through the City wall was thrown over the Fleet River, forming a communication between the priory and Bridewell, where the Emperor's suite was accommodated. It was

to this house that Henry summoned the abbots and priors of religious houses, and exacted from them £100,000. It was here also that, after twenty years of married life, Henry first declared his conscientious scruples as to his marriage with his late brother's widow, the sequel of which declaration belongs to history. The speech which Henry made on that occasion—in which he warned his subjects against venturing to arraign his conduct, as the proudest of them would learn that he was their Sovereign, and would answer with their heads for the presumption of their tongues—was humbly listened to and acquiesced in by the nobles and dignitaries of England, so terribly abased had they become under their tyrant! After the divorce case, Henry took a dislike to the palace, and let it fall into decay; in which state it remained till, in the following reign, it was appropriated to charitable and punitive purposes.

The dissolution of the monasteries filled London with idle and necessitous people, who had till then depended on ecclesiastical alms. Bishop Ridley petitioned the King, Edward VI., to grant the unused palace of Bridewell as a refuge for such people, which he did by charter in 1522. This charter was afterwards confirmed by Queen Mary, and the new institution was endowed with a great part of the revenues of the Savoy. In 1555 the City Companies were taxed for fitting it up. In 1567 many members of the first Congregational Church were imprisoned in Bridewell. The Lord Mayor urged them to recant, but they remained firm, and several of them died in prison. In 1608 twelve large granaries were erected in Bridewell at the expense of

the City, and in 1620 the old chapel was enlarged and beautified at the cost of the governors and inhabitants of the precinct. There was in it a portrait of Edward VI., with the following lines underneath :

‘ This Edward, of fair memory the Sixt,  
In whom, with greatness, goodness was commixt,  
Gave this Bridewell a palace in old times,  
For a chastening house of vagrant crimes.’

Of the many large fires lit up during the year of the Great Plague, in 1665, one was at the main gate of Bridewell. In 1666 the Great Fire of London destroyed the palace of Bridewell almost entirely, but it was rebuilt in two quadrangles, the principal of which fronted the Fleet River. It was then a house of correction for idle, loose, and dissolute persons, and night-walkers, who were set to work chiefly at beating hemp (see Hogarth, fourth plate of ‘ The Harlot’s Progress ’). But it was also a hospital for indigent persons and decayed traders, who were called art-masters, and could receive apprentices. Flogging was resorted to in the case of unruly prisoners. Both men and women were whipped on their naked backs before the Court of Governors. The president had a hammer in his hand, and the culprit was taken from the whipping-post when the hammer fell. The calls to knock when women were flogged were loud and incessant : ‘ Oh, good Sir Robert, knock ! Pray, good Sir Robert, knock ! ’ became at last a common cry of reproach among the lower orders, to denote that a woman had been whipped in Bridewell. Howard, visiting Bridewell in 1783, gave it a bad name ; he described the rooms as offensive, and reported that



the prisoners received daily only one penny loaf each, though the steward received eightpence a day for each prisoner, and the hemp-dresser, paid a salary of twenty pounds a year, had the benefit of the culprits' labour besides.

A few incidental remarks may fitly close our account of Bridewell.

Pennant says that in 1790 much of the original building yet remained, including several arches, octagon towers, and portions of the walls, as also a magnificent flight of ancient stairs leading to the then Court of Justice, a handsome apartment. The space where now stand Tudor and other streets was let to the New River Company for their offices; timber and other wharves had been established there for some time. In 1756 the timber-yard of a Mr. Howell, and two more timber-yards, and also the Newcastle glass warehouse, and thirteen other houses, were totally burnt down. Afterwards the City Gas Company was established on the spot; its coal-yard occupied what had once been the Bridewell burial-ground. But towards the end of the last century the Bridewell buildings underwent another change; the committee-rooms, chapel, and prisons were rebuilt, and the whole formed into one large quadrangle, with an entrance behind Bridge Street, the building being now known as Bridewell Hospital, though used as a place of detention for City apprentices, of whom only now and then one is to be found in a cell at Bridewell. In 1863 other alterations were made in the building, leaving of the original structure only the hall, treasurer's house, and offices devoted to the management of the Bridewell Hospital property, as also a few cells for unruly ap-

prentices, which, as already stated, are now but seldom occupied. The gasworks, the wharves, and other business premises which occupied the southern portion of the Bridewell precincts disappeared when the Embankment was built, and the magnificent halls of various educational and other institutions now cover the site—a site once hemmed in by Black and White Friars, sucking the life-blood of benighted citizens, whilst with their ‘*Alsatias*’ they turned the neighbourhood into a pandemonium for the benefit of the scoundrelism which in those days abounded in every quarter of London.

The old chapel was a fine structure, having on the south side three windows divided by mullions into three lights with cinquefoil-arched heads; the walls were richly wainscoted, the chancel was paved with black and white marble, and at the entrance were handsome iron gates, the gift of Sir William Withers, president in 1713. They are, we think, the same gates which are now in the corridor of the present building, and certainly are fine specimens of open wrought-iron work. The chapel was pulled down about 1803.

About the year 1570 one John Pain, a citizen, invented a mill to grind corn, which he got recommended to the Lord Mayor for the use of Bridewell, as it ground a greater quantity of corn than any other mill could do; when it was tried at Bridewell it was found that with the labour of two men as much was ground as was previously ground by three. It was also further useful inasmuch as it could be worked either with the hands or feet, so that a man lame in either could yet be kept at work as long as he had sound arms or sound legs. The authorities approved of the contrivance, which

was really an anticipation of the tread-mill—which was not introduced till the year 1822. The Bridewell apprentices were, it appears, trained in the working of fire-engines, such as they were in those days—mere squirts; still, the boys were active, and proved expert on occasions when their assistance was required at fires, which were of frequent occurrence, for London then, as now, was full of ill-built houses and of careless people.

Adjoining Bridewell on the west was the mansion of the Earl of Dorset, with gardens down to the river's edge. It had at first been the Bishop of Salisbury's City residence—whence we have Salisbury Square and Dorset Street in that locality. The actors, driven, as we have seen, by the Puritan authorities of London out of the City, had established themselves in the liberty of Blackfriars, where the City had no jurisdiction. For the same reason a theatre was established in 1586 in the precincts of the suppressed monastery of Whitefriars, to the west of the Earl of Dorset's property. But the district of Whitefriars enjoying the privilege of sanctuary, the patrons of the playhouse were of so mixed and, eventually, disreputable a character, that by the year 1609 the theatre had acquired a very bad name, which led to its being closed, and in 1619 the building was quite ruinous. Two players, Richard Gunnell and William Blagrove, in 1629 erected a playhouse in Salisbury Court, or Square, as it is now called, on what was originally the barn or granary of Salisbury House. In 1649 a company of Puritan soldiers, incited thereto by some fanatics, pulled down the theatre, and it was not rebuilt till the Restoration, when William Beeston, an actor, bought the ruin (in 1652), rebuilt the theatre,

and opened it in 1660. But its existence was short; it was swept away by the Great Fire of 1666. It was not rebuilt, but in 1671 a new playhouse was erected near the site of the Salisbury Court Theatre, close to the river, to which there were steps for the convenience of visitors by water. This theatre was managed by the widow of Davenant, the famous actor of that day. But in 1682 the company removed to Drury Lane, so that this theatre also had a short life of eleven years only. It had been built by Wren, and decorated by Grinling Gibbons. It was then let for various exhibitions, such as fencing, wrestling, and gymnastic feats, and in 1698 for the drawing of a penny lottery, in which a prize of £1,000 could be drawn by venturing one penny. The story was current at the time—of course, spread by the promoters of the lottery—that a boy, having once given a woman who asked for charity all he had, namely, a slice of bread-and-butter, she afterwards presented him with a penny, telling him that if he kept it long enough it would bring him many pounds; that he kept it for a number of years, and eventually, on some friend's advice, invested it in the penny lottery, and won the £1,000 prize. In 1703 an attempt was made to reopen the theatre; at last, it was closed by order of Queen Anne. The building was still standing in 1720, but was then pulled down, and the site turned into a timber-yard. Pepys was a frequent visitor to this theatre, as appears from his Diary.

The theatrical story of the Dorset Gardens Theatre is very interesting, from the many celebrated characters connected with it, but is beyond the scope of our account of Blackfriars, which, indeed, can deal with outlines

only. We must, however, not conclude it without a few words on Dorset House, to which we have had occasion to refer. It originally belonged to a Bishop of Winchester; but about 1217 a lease of it was granted by the Abbot of Westminster to Richard, Bishop of Salisbury, at the yearly rent of twenty shillings. It afterwards became the residence of the Sackville family, who held it by a long lease from the See, but it was finally alienated by Bishop Jewel for a piece of land near Cricklade in Wiltshire. In 1611 a grant from James I. confirmed the Manor of Salisbury Court to Richard, third Earl of Dorset. The first Earl of Dorset was Thomas Sackville, Baron Buckhurst, who at this house wrote his 'Porrex and Ferrex,' a tragedy which was performed at Whitehall before Queen Elizabeth. In 1660 the house was occupied by Clarendon, the Lord Chancellor. Another inhabitant was the Marquis of Newcastle. We have seen above that a theatre was built in 1629 on the granary site of Dorset House, which house itself was, however, left standing. It was of such vast extent as to be divided into 'Great' and 'Little' Dorset House. Great Dorset House was the jointure house of Cicely Baker, Dowager Countess of Dorset, who died in 1615. Dorset House, as already mentioned, perished in the Great Fire in 1666.

Spring Gardens, a bowling-green originally attached to the King's Palace at Whitehall, having been put down, a new Spring Gardens was opened in 1645 in the field behind the mews at Charing Cross by the barber of the fifth Earl of Dorset, Lord Chamberlain, who seems to have been a frequent and ardent patron of this bowling-green.

We cannot well leave the region of Blackfriars without a reference to its old bridge, which at first it was intended to name Pitt Bridge, in honour of William Pitt, but the monastic flavour still adhering to the locality, Blackfriars in the end carried the day. The necessity of building a bridge on the spot was first mooted in 1754. In 1760 Robert Mylne, a young Scotsman, just returned from studying at Rome, was appointed to carry out the work according to the plan designed by him. He completed it in ten years and three-quarters, at a cost of £152,840 3s. 10½d.; to which had to be added £5,830 for arching and filling up Fleet Ditch, £5,000 for piling and laying the foundations of the several piers, £400 for three latrines at the ends, and £2,167 for making, altering, and repairing the temporary bridge. This temporary bridge for foot-passengers was not opened till November, 1767, though the foundation-stone of the actual bridge was laid in October, 1760. It consisted of nine elliptical arches, and was 995 feet long. The width of the carriage-way was 28 feet, and the pavement 7 feet on each side. It was opened for carriages in November, 1769, and finished in 1770. A toll of one halfpenny was charged for crossing it, and there were toll-houses at each end of the bridge. These were burnt on June 7, 1780, by rioters, but rebuilt by the City at an expense of £1,105. In 1785 Government bought up the toll, and the bridge was made free. The toll-houses were sold in the same year for £99 15s., excepting some ironwork, which was reserved. The building of the bridge gave rise to violent controversies—hostile criticism and lampoons filled the papers—as the building



of every new bridge does to the present day. Looking at the engravings of the bridge which are extant, we find it had a heavy look about it; but for the time when it was built it was a handsome structure; it, however, lacked solidity. Between 1833 and 1840 it cost £74,000 in repairs, and the engineers were losers by the contract. In 1843 upwards of £100,000 had been spent in repairing it, so that in 1859 it was resolved to build a new bridge, and the demolition of the old one, which was effected in less than a year, was actively commenced in 1864. The new bridge was built in two years. The removal of the old bridge revealed its inherent original defects; the foundations of some of the piers were faulty, the masonry of the arches proved to be rather thinner than it appeared to the eye, and it was found to be stuffed with river ballast, mixed with bones and small, old-fashioned pipes. Originally the balustrade was very high—4 feet 10 inches—which was one of the items the hostile critics urged against it. It was lowered before the year 1810, as views of the bridge of that date prove. One of the explanations given to account for the too speedy decay of old Blackfriars Bridge was that the removal of old London Bridge in 1825, which had acted as a mill-dam in restraining the speed and scour of the river, had put a greater strain on the bridge than it was intended to bear, or than, at the time of its erection, it could have been thought likely to be subjected to.

Those who love the picturesqueness of monastic buildings and institutions, and cannot, or will not, see their squalor, filth, and stupidity, their false pretences and rapacity, and their injustice in becoming asylums

for all the enemies of civilized and honestly-living communities, may regret the disappearance of Blackfriars on one side, and of Whitefriars on the other side of the Fleet — but persons who are not enamoured of obscurantism will point with pride and pleasure to Printing House Square on the east, and to the noble educational and liberally-endowed establishments on the west, which in the near future must put an end to ignorance and eventually to superstition also, the two foster-parents of all monastic institutions.

## XI.

### OLD LONDON WINDMILLS, VANES, AND WEATHERCOCKS.

A WINDMILL is always a picturesque object in a landscape, and when in motion has an exhilarating effect on the mind; and to the man who thinks it affords much food for reflection. If the power which turns the sails were unknown to us, how mysterious this invisible force would appear, which can set in motion at one and the same time the ponderous machinery of as many mills as man chooses to erect on a given spot! And it seems to us that this power, which costs nothing, and is nearly always available, is too much neglected. For large industrial works, steam or gas engines may be more desirable; but there is much work done on a small scale, requiring some motive power, which has now to be supplied by hand labour, and though the air is sometimes perfectly still, and a windmill becomes useless, yet there are mechanical means of storing up power, so that advantage can be taken of a good blow, though no work may then be going on, to form a reserve of power for the time when it is really wanted, and when the mill cannot act from want

of wind. Moreover, modern windmills, whether with upright or horizontal sails or floats, are now made of such ingenious and delicate construction, that the slightest movement in the air is sufficient to set the mill in motion, and render it useful. And such a mill requires neither attention nor fuel, and is free from the danger of explosion—circumstances which render it worthy the attention of the small manufacturer or mechanician.

At what date windmills were first introduced into England is doubtful; but in Domesday Book seven mills are mentioned as belonging to Stepney, and, curiously enough, at Millwall, which derived its name from the mills, there were, even to this century, seven windmills. A windmill is mentioned as existing in 1264, when, it is said, Richard, King of the Romans, at the Battle of Lewes, took refuge in a windmill. The next reference we can find is to a windmill at Winchelsea, which stood there in 1297. The first windmills erected in London probably served draining purposes only, as many now do in Holland. Some of those at Millwall may have been built to drain the Isle of Dogs, and the most ancient views and maps of London show windmills in Moorfields and Finsbury Fields only, which it was desired to lay dry. Near Upper Moorfields there arose in 1549 a hill by the deposit of above a thousand cart-loads of human bones brought from St. Paul's charnel-house, which being soon covered with street dirt and rubbish from the City, the place was converted into a lay-stall, whereby the ground was so raised that three windmills were erected on it.

From the names of many streets of which the word mill forms an integral part, we may infer that mills—

that is, windmills—were numerous in London. The mills at Millwall have already been referred to; there was also in the same locality a Windmill Bank, but whether a separate street, or identical with Millwall, cannot now be ascertained.

At the top of Milford Lane, Strand, there stood in the time of Queen Elizabeth a windmill, from which, and from the ford to which the lane led, this latter took its name.

However, windmills were found in all parts of London. Besides the Windmill Hill in Moorfields, there was another street of that name between Leather Lane and Gray's Inn Road, so named after a windmill which had originally belonged to the prior and convent of East Sheen, together with a mansion known as Portpool, from which Portpool Lane derives its name. According to a plan of the fortification of London, ordered in 1642, Hornwork in the Whitechapel Road was situate near to a windmill standing there. Near Rathbone Place there is a Windmill Street, which took its name from a windmill which in the first half of the last century stood, surrounded by pleasant fields and avenues of walnut-trees, on the site of the chapel in Charlotte Street. The miller made a charge of one halfpenny to every person for the privilege of walking in his grounds. Persons living in 1832 remembered seeing the mill standing.

Great Windmill Street, at the top of the Haymarket, was so named from a mill which stood there till the reign of Charles II. In Faithorne's view of London the mill is boldly drawn; it stood on the west side of the street.

Some of the old views of Newgate show on the roof of that gate a windmill with six sails. For what purpose it was erected I have been unable to discover.

In 1592 the City was in treaty with Frederick Genebelli (called Genibella in the City Records) for the erection of a windmill at Tyburn, for the increase of the supply of water to the conduit at Ludgate. But there is no record of the erection of such a mill on that spot. At the western end of Seward Street, Goswell Road, there formerly stood a huge mound of earth, the site of which, though the mound has been removed, continues to be called Mountmill\*—a narrow *cul-de-sac* out of Seward Street is so called—because it was originally the site of a windmill, dating from a time anterior to Henry VIII. The mill was overthrown by a tempest, and Queen Katherine, the first wife of Henry VIII., erected a chapel on the spot; at the end of that King's reign the chapel was demolished, and a new windmill erected in its place. During the Great Plague in 1665 a pit was dug at Mountmill, and about 1,300 persons who had died in Clerkenwell were buried in it. Defoe says: 'This ground, I take it, was since made a physic garden [because it was so richly manured?], and after that has been built upon.' In the time of Edward I. one Thomas de Moose held a messuage, a windmill, and eight acres of land in East Smithfield, on condition of furnishing a foot-soldier, armed with bow and arrows, to serve in the Tower in the time of war.

There was a windmill, erected in 1663 by a Dutch-

\* This Mountmill was utilized in 1642, when London was fortified by order of Parliament, for erecting thereon a battery and breastwork.



man, at Limehouse; it was the first sawmill built in London, but it had to be abandoned because of the opposition of the sawyers, who feared thereby to be deprived of their means of subsistence. In 1770 one Houghton laid before the nation the advantages of such a mill, but did not recommend its construction, as he feared it would excite the rage of the populace. However, by desire of the Society of Arts, an opulent timber-merchant, a Mr. Dingley, in 1768 erected a sawmill, driven by wind, at Limehouse, under the direction of James Stansfield, who had learned in Holland and Norway, where such mills had long been in use, their construction and management. A mob assembled, and pulled the mill to pieces, but the damage was made good by the nation, and some of the rioters were punished. A new mill was afterwards erected, which was suffered to work without molestation, and gave occasion to the erection of others.

A very picturesque old landmark was Kilburn windmill, on Shootup, formerly Shuttup, Hill, about half-way between Kilburn and Cricklewood, opposite to Mill Lane, and a little south of the Windmill Tavern. As the manor of Shootup Hill was originally held by the Priory of St. John, Clerkenwell, the mill was probably originally erected by the said priory. On December 3, 1863, the building was discovered to be on fire, which is supposed to have been due to the fact that, the day having been stormy, the continuous rapid turning of the sails had heated some of the metal-work to such an extent that it ignited some of the woodwork contiguous to it. The fire, of course, was seen far and wide, and attracted the usual crowd; great efforts were made to save the

property, but in vain, as only one engine came from Paddington, and that was too late to be of any use. The whole mill, as well as the greater portion of the dwelling-house of the proprietor, was burnt down. This conflagration was the cause of the founding of the Kilburn Volunteer Fire Brigade, which has done good service in its time.

On the Surrey side windmills were plentiful ; there were several about the tidal ditches of Bermondsey to drain them. Of these tidal ditches there were thirty miles in this district, extending from the river Thames to Thomas à Watering in the Old Kent Road. They have nearly all been covered in or otherwise dealt with. There was a windmill in what is now the New Cut—which even at the beginning of this century was open fields ; on the north side of the street there were as late as 1820 but very few houses, irregularly scattered here and there over the fields. In the winding street then called Narrow Wall, now Belvedere Road, there was a perfect group of picturesque old wooden windmills.

And here we may as well say a few words anent the construction of such mills. A windmill depending for its efficiency on the wind must be so placed that the wind shall catch and act on its sails or wings. But as the wind is variable, the mill must be movable ; it has to be turned to the wind. To do this the whole building is either constructed to turn on a post below, or when the mill is large, and especially when a sawmill, on a platform or turn-table ; in such cases the building is of wood. When it is of stone or bricks, the roof or cap, together with the axle-tree and the sails, only is movable. Mills of the former kind are called German

mills, those of the latter Dutch, though in Holland I think the former are more numerous. The revolving roofs were invented by a Fleming in the sixteenth century, and the cap with the revolving sails is automatically turned to the wind by a vane at the back, and at right angles to the sails. The building containing the heavy machinery, whether millstones or sawing apparatus, being more firm and solid than a movable wooden house, is in every way preferable; but for saw-mills the latter is more suitable. The whole building or the roof is moved round either by a wheel or pinion within, or by a long lever without. The London windmills were nearly all wooden structures, turning on a post. From a passage in the 'Ambulator; or, a Tour round London,' published *circa* 1790, it would appear that the first windmill of brick with a movable cap near London was erected in 1786 by Walker and Co., at Hoxton, for grinding white-lead. It had, opposite the sails, a gallery for turning the whole top, and instead of the usual number of sails, viz., four, it had five of them. The mills by which in Holland the water is drawn up and thrown off from the land were at first driven by horses, and afterwards by wind; but as they were immovable, and could work only when the wind was in one quarter, they were afterwards placed, not on the ground, but on a float, which could be moved round in such a manner that the mill should catch every wind.

In the Wandsworth Road, on a portion of the site now occupied by the South-Western Railway goods-yard, there stood early in this century a very large windmill for grinding corn. At Battersea there was

formerly a windmill of novel construction ; it was called a horizontal air mill, and was used for grinding linseed. It stood on the site of a portion of the family seat of Lord Bolingbroke, a very fine mansion with forty rooms on a floor, the greater part of which was pulled down in 1778. The part left standing formed a dwelling-house ; one of the parlours, facing the Thames, was lined with cedar, beautifully inlaid, and was the favourite study of Pope. The design of the mill was taken from that of another, on a smaller scale, constructed at Margate.\* Its height from the foundation was 140 feet, the diameter of the conical part 54 feet at the base and 45 at the top ; the outer part consisted of ninety-six shutters, 80 feet high and 9 inches broad, which, by the pulling of a rope, opened and shut in the manner of Venetian blinds. In the inside the main shaft of the mill was the centre of a large circle formed by the sails, which consisted of ninety-six double planks placed perpendicularly, and of the same height as the planks that formed the shutters. The wind rushing through the openings of the shutters acted with great power upon the sails, and, when it blew fresh, turned the mill with prodigious rapidity ; but this could be moderated in an instant by decreasing the apertures between the shutters, which was effected, as was the entire stopping of the mill, by the pulling of a rope. A flour-mill now occupies the site of the horizontal air-mill.

Another handsome brick-built (?) windmill with a movable cap formerly stood in front of the Red House in Battersea Fields, now Battersea Park. It was erected on a stone pier or platform projecting into the river,

\* It stood on Hooper's Hill, at Margate.

but was removed before the Red House was pulled down. I have a water-colour drawing and an engraving of the Red House, both showing the mill, as also a water-colour without the mill; but as all these views, unfortunately, are undated, the time of the removal of the mill is uncertain.

Close to a good-sized pond in Lambeth Walk there stood in the last century the handsome windmill, built chiefly of wood, owned by the Apothecaries' Company, and used by them for grinding their drugs. It had a gallery all round for trimming the sails. Up to the thirties in this century there was a large farmhouse to the west of Brixton Hill, called Bleak Hall, near which stood a windmill, which was a landmark in the perambulation of the Manor of Stockwell, and probably a whipping station for the boys. The farm and mill existed far into this century.

A picturesque wooden windmill formerly stood on Dulwich Common; it was known by the curious name of Bree Kill, and was situate close to the old mill-pond, now transformed into an ornamental lake. When, in 1866, Dulwich College was rebuilt, or, rather, an entirely new building was erected, about one quarter of a mile south of the original college, the windmill had to be removed, a portion of the new college occupying its site.

Windmills, being conspicuous objects if they stood on the line of a parish or manor boundary, were of course very convenient land-marks. We have seen one such at Bleak Hall Farm. There was another answering the same purpose, besides performing its legitimate work. This was situate in the Camberwell Road, at

the corner of a lane, formerly called Windmill Place—the name is now abolished—and formed one of the boundary marks between the parishes of Camberwell and Newington. The precise spot where it stood was near the present Wyndham Road, and the name of its owner was Freeman. It was a clumsy-looking, square wooden structure, revolving on a circular substructure, the means of moving the upper part being a long lever outside. The miller's house stood by the side of it.

A windmill once stood at the northern end of the Upper Grange Road. This mill originally was the property of the Abbey of Bermondsey.

There was a flour-mill at Deptford belonging to the King, which must have been a windmill, as we may assume from the fact about to be mentioned. On February 26, 1761, the wind was so high that it drove the mill with such velocity that it could not be stopped, and taking fire, was entirely consumed, together with a large quantity of flour.

Windmills were evidently considered valuable property in the fourteenth century, for whilst pasture land was rated at the annual value of threepence, and arable land at sixpence, per acre, a wood at six shillings and eightpence, a capital messuage at the like sum, a windmill was rated at ten shillings, probably because vassals and tenants were obliged to grind their corn at the lord's mill, for which they paid a certain value in kind. Such mills were called ban mills; in old documents *molendina bannale*. The origin of the custom was not altogether founded on oppression and injustice. The building of mills was at all times expensive, and could be undertaken only by the rich, who, to indemnify themselves for the



money expended in order to benefit the public, who were thus saved the task of grinding their corn by hand—a tedious and laborious process—stipulated that the people in the neighbourhood should have their corn ground at no other mills than those erected by them.

*Vanes and weathercocks* are contrivances moving with the wind, and therefore fitly follow our remarks on windmills. Originally churches as a rule were surmounted by weathercocks, the cock being chosen as the emblem of vigilance. Papal enactments ordered the figure of a cock to be set on church steeples as the cognizance of St. Peter. The steeples of many London churches are surmounted by cocks; old St. Paul's was so. The emblem has been adopted in modern buildings; on the turrets of the meat-market giant cocks in the act of crowing have been set up. As early as the tenth century the figures of cocks and other birds were placed on the masts of ships to show the direction of the wind. Buildings such as castles, mansions, forts, displayed vanes, or small flags or banners, which is the meaning of vane, it being derived immediately from the German word *Fahne*, which means a flag or banner. But other emblems, symbolical of the purposes to which the building is devoted, have been employed. Thus Billingsgate has its dolphins, Leadenhall Market its pheasants. The central building of the old College of Physicians, in Warwick Lane, had on its roof a cock, because this bird was sacred to Æsculapius.

Vanes assumed all sorts of shapes. The plain square ones, resembling flags, were usually perforated with letters, dates of the erection of the building, monograms, or other devices. Thus St. Mildred's, Bread Street, has

the monogram **M** and double **B**, with an heraldic mark. The vane of St. Clement's Church is perforated with an anchor, the symbol of that saint, who is said to have been thrown into the sea, tied to an anchor, by order of the Emperor Trajan. St. James's Church, Clerkenwell, has an elaborately perforated vane. Oxford Market, removed in 1880-1882, the site of which is now occupied by Oxford Mansions, had on its central building a brass vane with the initials H. E. H., being those of Edward Lord Harley and his wife Henrietta. Then, we find vanes in the shape of arrows. The churches of St. Edmund in Lombard Street, and of St. Stephen in Coleman Street, have their steeples surmounted by arrow vanes, because both those saints are said to have been killed by arrows. Lady Owen's schools in Clerkenwell had an arrow on their gable front, and two others at the corners, in commemoration of Lady Owen's escape from harm from an arrow accidentally shot through her tall hat. Two of the original arrows are now in the schoolroom. The church of St. Lawrence-in-the-Jewry has a vane in the form of a gridiron, because the saint was broiled to death on one of extraordinary size. The saint, according to the legend, rather enjoyed the process, and pleasantly asked the executioner to turn him on the other side, as that one downwards was done beautifully brown.\* Those Roman Emperors who were so rough on the saints evidently had to stand a lot of chaff from them !

From Queen Caroline's drawing-room at Kensington

\* The Escorial in Spain, as the reader need scarcely be reminded, is built in the shape of a gridiron, to commemorate the same roasting process.

Palace a good view is obtained of the archway in the west front of the palace, with its turret and weathercock. George II. gazed anxiously at this weathercock to see if the wind had changed, so that the ships he expected with despatches from Germany might come in. It was the last thing he looked upon before he died suddenly while seated at breakfast. In the King's Gallery at the same palace there is over the mantelpiece the old pointer, which, connected with a vane still existing above the roof, indicated on a dial the direction of the wind—an apparatus contrived by William III., which so excited the admiration of Peter the Great when he paid the King a visit that he had no eye for the paintings and other works of art which decorated the palace.

The ship was always a favourite emblem for a vane. St. Mildred's Church, formerly on the north side of the Poultry, had such a vane. The vane which may now be seen on the top of the building occupied by Messrs. Mappin and Webb, at the corner of Queen Victoria Street, is an exact counterpart in size and shape of the vane which formerly decorated St. Mildred's Church; it was at first intended to put up the identical vane, but it was found to be too decayed for the purpose. St. Michael's Church, Queenhithe, another of the City churches which have disappeared, had a vane in the shape of a ship in full sail, the hull of which could contain a bushel of grain—thus referring to the former traffic in corn in that locality.

Two very handsome ship vanes remain to be mentioned. The first surmounts the offices of the Astor estates, on the Victoria Embankment, adjoining the offices of the

School Board, and represents the ship in which Columbus performed his first voyage of discovery. It is a noble specimen of its kind. The second surmounts the turret of 54, Kensington Park Road, and Mr. H. T. Van Laun, the owner of the house, tells me that it is a copy of the vane on Rochester Town Hall, representing Sir Cloudesley Shovel's ship, which was built at Rochester. Mr. Van Laun was till quite lately the owner of the racing yacht *Caress*, which gave a very good account of itself in the race with the German Emperor's *Meteor*.

St. Martin's-in-the-Fields has its steeple surmounted by a crown to denote, it is said, that the Sovereign resides within the parish; but more probably on account of the liberality the King displayed at the rebuilding of the church (in 1726), towards which he gave considerable sums.

The steeple of St. Mary-le-Bow is surmounted by a dragon, which is 10 feet long, and was regilded in 1820. I can find no indication why this emblem was chosen for a church vane. The Royal Exchange is surmounted by Sir Thomas Gresham's crest, a grasshopper, which also appeared on his house in Lombard Street, on the site of No. 68, now Martin's Bank, which also has the grasshopper for its sign. When the Exchange was burnt in 1838, the salvage included the copper-gilt grasshopper, which was not sold with the rest of the salvage. One of Mother Shipton's prophecies was that when the dragon of Bow Church and the grasshopper of the Royal Exchange should meet, London streets should be deluged with blood! Dean Swift in his 'Wonderful Prophecy' gives another version, viz., 'The dragon upon Bow Church and the grasshopper upon

the Royal Exchange shall meet together upon Stock's Market' (the site of the present Mansion House) 'and shake hands like brethren.' Now, curiously enough, these vanes, when repairs were going on at the Exchange and Bow Church, were lying together, not at Stock's Market, but in a stone-mason's yard in Old Street Road. How and why did these metal vanes get into a stone-mason's yard? On the roof of the Exchange is a sort of mast, at the top of which is a fan like that of a windmill, which keeps a plate of metal with its face presented to the wind. A rod descends from that to the underwriters' room; to its end is attached a pencil, which on a sheet of paper indicates the strength and direction of the wind at any hour of the twenty-four of every day.

Returning to vanes on church steeples, old Camberwell Church, burnt down in 1841, had for its vane a copper scroll with a pen passing through it, and a curious story concerning it, but one having no foundation in fact, made the round of the London papers. It was stated that six days after the fire one of the workmen employed in clearing away the rubbish had found the scroll entire, and on opening it discovered that it contained certain manuscripts written with the identical copper pen that formed the other part of the vane. As the turret on which the vane had been placed was entirely destroyed by the fire, the vane, of course, perished with it. The whole story of the discovery was a pure fabrication, but the inventor of it, to render it attractive to the *gobemouches*, gave full details. One of the MSS., he said, stated: 'This Phane was gilt by John Augustile Foulder, Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>, 1797. P.S.—Wrote this with the

Point of this Phane.' On another paper was written : 'John Foulder, sen., wrote this with the pen in Nov. 1797;' and on a third piece : 'John Gallington, Nov. 27, 1797.' There was a card also in the scroll with the following words : 'This Phane was made by Robert Broad, workman to Mr. Whaites, and wrote this with the pen, Nov. 27, 1797, aged 38 years.' The implement thus handed down to us is a foot and a half long. This appeared in the *Morning Herald*, February 18, 1841. Penny-a-liners in those days were evidently as inventive as now, and a pen thirty-eight years old was a venerable one !

In the High Street, Peckham, just opposite to Dr. Stocker's Lunatic Asylum, there stands an old-fashioned red-brick house, one-third part of which has been pulled down and rebuilt in the form of an ordinary and ugly square brick box, whilst the other two-thirds have been divided into two houses, and shops erected in front of them. From a very old inhabitant of Peckham, now deceased, I heard that on this house there was erected at the beginning of this century, and continued on it till about the middle of it, a vane of curious construction. After many inquiries in various quarters, official and private, which led to no result, I was favoured, in reply to an inquiry made through the *South London Press*, with a letter from H. S. Cuming, Esq., F.S.A., which gave the desired information, and as his letter is very interesting and amusing, I quote from it as follows :

'In the last century my grandfather, who died in 1801, had a rather eccentric old friend living in what was then and long after known as the Roadway,



Peckham. The old gentleman needed a new cowl to his chimney, and asked his friend if he could design a device to crown the said cowl which would be at once novel and striking. Mr. Richard Cuming sketched a cat pursuing a rat, which suited the old gentleman's fancy exactly, and he begged my grandfather to make a large drawing to scale, from which the device was cut out in stout sheet-iron, and affixed to the top of the cowl, and proved a great success, for crowds stopped to gaze at it—for when whirled round by the wind the mimic creatures had a really life-like effect. Often, when walking along the Peckham Road with my father, the latter would point up and say, "There's your grandfather's cat. . . ." As the cat and rat were unaccompanied by letters marking the cardinal points, the animals could only be considered as a quaint device, and in no way as an anemoscope.'

In a paper entitled 'Anemoscopes,' by the writer of the letter just quoted, we further read that each of the four turrets of the White Tower of the Tower of London was provided with a banner vane pierced with the arms of France and England quarterly; and that one, pierced with the arms of the See of Canterbury, impaled with those of Juxon, crowns the hexagonal lantern of the archiepiscopal palace at Lambeth. Mr. Cuming further mentions a vane, representing a blazing star or comet, which formerly surmounted one of the beast-houses in the Surrey Zoological Gardens, which was supposed to have been brought from the King's Mews at Charing Cross. From the same source I learn that a vane, representing an old red-coated newsman, with a horn to his lips, once surmounted a summer-house at the bottom of a

garden in Manor Place, Walworth Road, belonging to an old gentleman named Fraser, a tulip fancier of local fame. And in the garden of what is now 129, Camberwell Road, there was a vane, representing an ensign in full regimentals, so contrived that he raised and lowered his furled standard with the shifting of the wind. Mr. Cuming also records in a letter to me that in the Old Kent Road, near the Green Man, there was a building with a turret, surmounted by a good-sized gilt vane in the form of Pegasus. And the front of the stable belonging to 69, Kennington Park Road used to be surmounted by a lofty shaft supporting a horse, richly gilded; but a heavy wind threw both down, and they were never replaced.

On finally reperusing this chapter, the dragon of St. Mary-le-Bow reminds me that I have not mentioned another dragon, which omission might bring on me severe censure, as a slight offered to the legal profession. How I came to forget him I cannot explain, as, while I was writing this book, I took a special journey to have a good look at the monster, which stands on the lantern of Gray's Inn Hall, and, with its horned head, terrible claws, and forked tail, seems to be a very suitable emblem of the 'Devil's Own.' One of his claws is held up, just as counsel might do in bewildering a puzzled jury with some incomprehensible point of law. He is also black, which is another formidable feature, and makes us glad he is perched up so high, so that he cannot reach us unless we go up to him, which every wise man endeavours to avoid.

## XII.

### VAUXHALL BRIDGE: ITS SHORT AND *NOT* MERRY LIFE.

**L**ONG before these pages emerge from the press, old Vauxhall Bridge will have totally disappeared; its demolition began towards the end of the year 1898. Yet it was not really old; it was opened to the public in 1816, so that its existence did not exceed eighty-two years—not a long life for a bridge which cost £300,000.

In the first years of this century the districts known as Millbank and Pimlico were almost uninhabited, and a ferry between them and Vauxhall was a sufficient means of communication between the north and south banks of the river at that spot. But when the extensive building operations on the Pimlico estate commenced, and population was largely increased, the necessity of a bridge was felt, and so in 1809\* an Act was passed for incorporating a company of proprietors to be called the

\* In the previous year (1808) there had been a scheme afloat for building a bridge between Lambeth Palace and Horseferry Road, but it seems to have been abandoned for Vauxhall Bridge. The Lambeth Suspension Bridge was not built till 1862.

‘Vauxhall Bridge Company,’ who were authorized to build a bridge from the south side of the river, at or near Cumberland Gardens, or Vauxhall Turnpike, to the opposite shore, called Millbank. They were empowered to raise £200,000, £30,000 of which was to be invested in the Three per Cents., for the purpose of the Act, before any lands should be purchased or works begun. On May 9, 1811, the foundation-stone of the new bridge was laid on the Middlesex side. The Prince Regent, who was to have performed the ceremony, was prevented attending; Lord Dundas acted as his proxy, and officially christened the bridge ‘Regent’s’ Bridge. In a cavity of the stone was placed a glass case containing gold, silver, and copper coins, with an engraved plate recording the event. The weather being very bad at the time, the stone was left some time uncovered. The bridge was intended to be built externally of a most solid Scotch granite, the ornaments and finishings of Portland stone. It was to consist of seven arches, the central one of 100 feet span; its total length was to be 920 feet, and it was expected to take five years to build. Mr. Ralph Dodd was the projector, but disputes arose between him and the proprietors, by whom he was dismissed, and John Rennie called in.

Before operations commenced, however, a new plan was submitted to the committee by Sir Samuel Bentham, in conjunction with Mr. Grillier, viz., to build the bridge within two years for the sum of £75,000, the upper parts to be of cast-iron, which plan was adopted by the subscribers in March, 1812. After a while, Colonel Baynton took Sir Samuel’s place; Mr. Rennie

withdrew entirely from the undertaking, and fresh disputes having arisen between the engineers and the committee, Mr. Walker, an eminent engineer, was appointed to finish the structure. Mr. Walker was a founder at Rotherham, in Yorkshire, at whose works Thomas Paine made his first experiments on a large scale in iron bridges, having in 1787 presented to the Academy of Sciences in Paris a model of such a bridge. The famous one-arch iron bridge at Sunderland was the first result of Paine's experiments; it was cast at Mr. Walker's works. It was entirely Paine's idea, but the prejudice against his name and writings enabled an impostor to claim, and retain, the merit of the invention. Paine sent a full explanation of his plans and experiments to the Society of Arts, which was about to be printed in their Transactions, when the appearance of the 'Rights of Man' put a stop to the publication: bigotry always was a stumbling-block placed in the path of science. Under Mr. Walker's direction the work was resumed, and the foundation-stone of the Surrey side abutment was laid in September, 1813, by Prince Charles, afterwards Duke of Brunswick. The bridge was finished and opened to the public in 1816; the total expense, instead of £75,000, is stated to have been nearly £300,000. When did contractors ever remain within the original estimate?

Approaches to the new bridge had to be made. Now, on the Surrey side was the river Effra, which at Vauxhall Cross was spanned by a bridge, originally built by the Abbot of Westminster, and long known as Cox's Bridge (why?); it was rebuilt in 1703 by the county at an expense of £150. Between that and Vauxhall

Stairs, the landing-place of the ferry, stood Cumberland Gardens and Burnett's distillery. The latter was left untouched, but Cumberland Gardens were greatly curtailed. They occupied a large space of ground, now wholly occupied by the South Metropolitan Gasworks, except the portion which was required for the new road up to the bridge. Facing Vauxhall Cross, where there was a turnpike, stood a large galleried inn, the Royal Oak, which, of course, had to be demolished. The gardens, with a tavern attached, were a place of considerable resort, and are frequently mentioned in the literature of the day. They remained in existence till 1825, when the tavern was burnt to the ground, and the site was first appropriated by the South London Waterworks Company, and in 1833 by the above-mentioned gas company. The gardens derived their name from an association of gentlemen partial to sailing and racing, and known as the Cumberland Society. They yearly gave a silver cup to be sailed for from Blackfriars Bridge up to Putney and back to Vauxhall, where a vessel was moored near the stairs, and the sailing-boat that first passed this mark on its return gained the prize. Cumberland Gardens no doubt derived considerable advantage in the consumption of liquids after each contest. A view of a portion of the gardens, full of beautiful large trees, with the bridge in the distance, was published early in this century.

It appears from a note in the addenda to Allen's 'History of Lambeth,' that the waterworks company at first intended rebuilding the Cumberland Tavern, but they never carried out the idea.

Between Cumberland Gardens and the distillery there anciently stood, close to the water's edge, a building



known as Marble Hall. The very narrow lane between the southern block of houses and the distillery still goes by the name of Marble Hall Lane. Also between Cumberland Gardens and the site of the distillery, but at some distance from the river, stood Copt Hall, which afterwards was described as Vauxhall Manor House. According to an engraving published by Allen, of Kennington, it was a wooden house of very curious construction and appearance; but in a survey of Kennington in 1615 it is described as a handsome tenement built of brick. Whatever it was, it was, after passing through the hands of various owners, surrendered in 1629 to Charles I. After the King's death, Parliament ordered a survey of the house, and it was then described as 'a fair dwelling-house, strongly built, three stories and a half high.' It was not sold, but retained 'to the use of the Commonwealth,' and so at the Restoration came back to the King; and Jasper Calthoff, a Dutchman, who was employed in making guns and other warlike instruments for Government, occupied it for some time. Then it was occupied by a sugar baker, and after him was turned into a distillery, but this not succeeding, the premises became ruinous, and were demolished. The site was afterwards held by Mr. Pratt, the father-in-law of Sir Joseph Mawbey, Bart., and after him by Sir Charles Blicke, Knt., and several under-tenants.

Close to this spot is supposed to have been the western outlet of Canute's trench, which, it will be remembered, was cut by that King from Rotherhithe to Lambeth Reach, for the purpose of investing London—as he found London Bridge too strongly fortified to pass it—and thus reducing it by cutting

off its supplies. That this trench, commencing at the Wet Dock, Deptford, passing over Thomas à Watering and Newington Butts, reached the Thames again at Vauxhall, seems admitted by most antiquaries. But some place the outlet close to Vauxhall Creek, others place it a little more north, and some suppose it to have been close to Lambeth church; the supporters of the Vauxhall site are, however, the more numerous. In a letter Dr. John Wallis\* wrote from Oxford, October 4, 1699, to Pepys, the writer explains how one day he walked across Lambeth Fields, and in various spots traced the course of the old trench, though the greater portion of it was already filled up and turned into meadow-land again.

On this spot also was erected, in 1643, one of the forts built by order of Parliament during the civil wars in the reign of Charles I., for the protection of the City of London. This work was prosecuted with uncommon zeal, thousands of citizens, their wives, families, and servants, sharing in the toil of digging, etc. Portions of this fort at Vauxhall were still existing in 1786.

Where now the railway-station yard is full of cabs, there were gardens once famous for their grapes and flowers, but they, like Vauxhall Gardens, which were opposite, are all gone.

Millbank and the adjoining land to the west, known as Neate Houses, from an old mansion originally standing there, called Neyte or Neate, was granted by Edward VI. (1547 - 1553) to Sir Anthony Broune. Millbank itself was a swamp, which, about the same time as Vauxhall Bridge was built, disappeared under

\* Dr. John Wallis, Savilian Professor of Geometry. Died 1703.

Millbank Prison, recently demolished, the site of which is now occupied by Mr. Tate's Picture Gallery. To the east of it was Peterborough House, which eventually came into the Grosvenor family, who rebuilt it in its present form; it is now occupied by the great contractors, Mowlem and Co. Millbank took its name from a mill which formerly stood there, and was the property of the abbots of Westminster. Vauxhall Bridge Road, in the greater part of its length one of the dreariest roads in London, dates from the erection of the bridge.

The bridge itself, after having, as mentioned above, been three years building, was opened to the public in August, 1816. It was originally called Regent Bridge, but becoming the main access from the west and north to Vauxhall Gardens, it soon acquired and retained the name it bore during the whole time of its existence. It had nine arches of equal span, whose chord line was 78 feet; the width of the piers was 12 feet at the springing of the arches, the breadth of the roadway was 36 feet. There were ten iron girders, of three pieces each, in each opening. The height above high-water to the under side of the central arch was 29 feet. The abutments were supported on a wooden framing, technically called a grid, resting on piles, the tops of which are from 5 to 7 feet below the surface of the foreshore. The piers rest on grids alone, laid on the top of the clay. When the bridge was built, the water rose to a much higher level than now, in consequence of old London Bridge acting as a dam to the upper part of the river; it is therefore likely that the piers were built within coffer-dams, but there is no record on that point. The abutments and piers were faced with Bristol pennet, backed up and

filled in with brickwork—all sound material and good work, as the demolition showed. The piers above the springing level of the ribs were hollow, with occasional cross walls. Various contrivances in the structure, too technical to be discussed here, gave it extraordinary rigidity ; but the open railing forming the parapet had a very poor look.

Of course, the shareholders in the bridge expected to get their dividends out of the tolls they were authorized to charge. These tolls on Vauxhall Bridge were higher than any charged on other bridges. Thus, on Waterloo Bridge, the cost of building which was more than three times that of Vauxhall Bridge, the tolls were as follows :

						<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Foot-passenger	...	...	...	...	...	0	1
Coach with 6 horses	...	...	...	...	...	1	6
" " 4 horses	...	...	...	...	...	1	0
" " 2 or 3 horses	...	...	...	...	...	0	6
" " 1 horse	...	...	...	...	...	0	4
Chaise with 1 horse	...	...	...	...	...	0	3
Oxen, per score	...	...	...	...	...	0	8
Calves, sheep, pigs, per score	...	...	...	...	...	0	4

These were the tolls levied on Waterloo Bridge, level throughout its whole length, and therefore more easy to cross than the steep Vauxhall Bridge, yet on this latter the tolls were much higher, namely :

						<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Foot-passenger (the same as Waterloo)	...	...	...	...	...	0	1
Coach with 6 horses	...	...	...	...	...	2	6
" " 4 horses	...	...	...	...	...	2	0
" " 2 or 3 horses	...	...	...	...	...	1	0
" " 1 horse	...	...	...	...	...	0	6
Chaise with 1 horse	...	...	...	...	...	0	6
Oxen, per score	...	...	...	...	...	1	0
Calves, sheep, pigs, per score	...	...	...	...	...	0	6

In 1824 the tolls yielded a clear yearly income of £8,500.

The bridge, which had cost nearly £300,000 to build, was purchased by the late Metropolitan Board of Works, in 1879, for a sum of £75,000, and thrown open to the public, free of all tolls, in the same year; the octagonal toll-houses and the gates at each end of the bridge were removed. The chaff and jeering the toll-collectors had to undergo from the drivers of carts, cabs, and other vehicles on the last day the toll was taken were enough to set up half a dozen comic writers for several weeks. One word as to the tolls. That foot-passengers should pass free seems just enough: the injury they do to the road is infinitesimal—it is their boots rather that suffer. But that persons who for pleasure or profit can afford to keep vehicles, whose traffic really damages the road, should not contribute to its repair by the payment of toll seems to us highly unjust. The wheels of the vehicles and the hoofs of the horses which draw them cut up and wear out the macadam, stone, asphalt, or wooden paving of the road, which is now kept in repair, and sometimes renewed entirely, at the cost of the ratepayers, the majority of whom do not keep vehicles; those who do, pay no more towards these repairs than the non-driving community; the latter, therefore, pay for a benefit conferred on vehicle-owners only, who thus escape a charge which should justly be put upon them. Is it too late to put a stop to this wrong?

Vauxhall Bridge was like a good woman—it had no history. No event of national or local importance is recorded as having taken place on or near it. Its most lively days were those when some great race at Epsom or some extra festival at the Crystal Palace took place, to either of which places it was the nearest route;

then, morning and evening, the bridge would be crowded with vehicles of all descriptions, from the four-horse coach to the costermonger's barrow. But it never was a place for promenading; people would hurry across, for the wind, always high on the bridge, would, rushing through the open iron balustrade, almost cut the pedestrians' legs off. Though in one respect it resembled the Bridge of Sighs—in having a prison on one side—it had no palace on the other, only dingy wharves, and barges full of light-coloured cement and black coal, lying in front of the grimy gasworks, to which the high flames rising from the vast chimneys gave, and still give, at night a weird appearance. Marble Hall and Copt Hall, which might have been considered palaces, had disappeared long before the bridge was thought of.

The bridge, which had been sufficient for the traffic in the good old sleepy times, became too narrow and too steep for the heavily-laden waggons, the dashing tradesmen's carts and reckless hansoms which used it as soon as the toll had been taken off. Carmen owning large numbers of vans, contractors for the removal and transport of goods, and omnibus proprietors, whose vehicles now began to cross the bridge, combined to agitate for a new one, and to assist them the cry was raised that the old one was not safe. As long ago as December 12, 1888, a public meeting was held at the Lambeth Vestry Hall to take into consideration the advisability of building a new and commodious Vauxhall Bridge, and to make improvements for facilitating the traffic at and near Vauxhall Cross; but it took close on ten years to arrive at the realization of that object. However, in February, 1898, the London County Council finally sanctioned the construction of the new bridge, and approved



the design of the engineer, Sir A. Binnie. The bridge will be a five-arch structure, supported by four piers and suitable abutments. The central span will be 149 feet, the two intermediate spans 144 feet, and the two land spans 130 feet (we omit inches); it will be 760 feet in total length, and 28 feet in height above high-water mark; its width will be 80 feet, the carriage-way 50 feet, and the footways 15 feet each. It will be a concrete bridge, faced with the whitest granite obtainable, though at first, it seems, it was intended to use red and gray granite for the purpose. The end pedestals are to have statuary placed on them. To break up the long line of parapet, columns are to be introduced to carry the lamps which are to light the bridge, their tops being surmounted with bronze ornaments. A similar device has been employed on a bridge over the Rhone at Geneva with very good effect. The estimate of the cost is £380,000.

The design for the new Vauxhall Bridge has been violently assailed in the press, the argument being that architecturally it is a failure, just as in this respect Blackfriars, Battersea, and Hammersmith Bridges are said to be failures. The present writer, being neither an architect nor an expert in bridge-building, does not venture to express an opinion on the point. As to his feelings, he confesses that all those bridges seem to him very handsome structures, and he is quite content to let the architects fight it out among themselves and with the engineers, who, it seems, stir up all this opposition by not consulting the former. If we, though not architecturally trained, may hold an opinion on the matter, it is that the lamp-carrying columns over the piers are too tall for the lower columns, with which they are

certain to be compared, as also with the piers, which will appear very short in proportion to the lamp columns, especially at the time of high-water—thus totally destroying the scale. This always seemed to us one of the defects of the Pons Aelius, the bridge facing the Castle of St. Angelo. As represented on ancient medals, the columns which originally surmounted its parapet were much too high for the piers, which were thus dwarfed, and looked overloaded. The admirers of antiquity through thick and thin will probably tell us that we are quite wrong. Perhaps we are; but don't all speak at once; and when you have spoken be satisfied with your protest, as I am with mine.

It was stated at the beginning of this article that on the laying of the foundation-stone on the Middlesex side of old Vauxhall Bridge an engraved plate and a number of the then current coins were enclosed in a glass case, and deposited in the said stone. In the demolition of the northern abutment of the bridge the foundation-stone was reached on September 14, 1899, and the glass case with its contents uncovered. The contractors for the new bridge, Messrs. Pethick Brothers, with whom I had been in communication, courteously informed me of the find, and a few days afterwards I had the gratification of seeing these interesting relics at the offices of the London County Council, who claimed them according to a clause in their agreement with the contractors. The coins and the massive silver plate, about 9 inches by 5 inches, are in an excellent state of preservation, the coins looking new, as if they had just come from the Mint. They consist of, in silver, one twopenny-piece, one threepenny-piece, one fourpenny-piece, one sixpence (dated 1787), one shilling (dated 1787), and one five-

shilling-piece (dated 1804, and with the inscription, 'Bank of England'); in gold, one half-guinea (dated 1804) and one guinea (dated 1799); in copper, one penny, one halfpenny, and one farthing (dated 1799).

The silver plate has on it the following inscription :

ON THE NINTH DAY OF MAY

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

MDCCCXI

AND IN THE FIFTY-FIRST YEAR OF THE REIGN

OF HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE III

THE FIRST STONE OF THIS BRIDGE

WAS LAID BY

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS GEORGE PRINCE OF WALES,

REGENT

OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,

REPRESENTED BY

LORD DUNDAS,

JOSEPH SHEE, CHAIRMAN,

HENRY BUNKLEY, DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN.

WILLIAM ROBT HY BROCON

JOHN BURNELL

WILLIAM CHALKLEN

SAMUEL DAVIS

WALTER HILTON

GEORGE LEYBURN

THOMAS POPPLEWELL

NICHOLAS PRENDERGAST

THOMAS ROLLE

WILLIAM SMITH

GEORGE WATTS

JOHN WARMINGTON

ABRAHAM WALKER,

BEING THE COMMITTEE OF THE PROPRIETORS OF THE

VAUXHALL BRIDGE COMPANY, AND

THOMAS RENNIE, CIVIL ENGINEER

AND F.R.S., &C. &C. &C.

The place in which these relics will finally be deposited is not yet decided on; they may remain with the London County Council, or may eventually be handed over to some public museum.

### XIII.

#### SAVAGE OLD LONDON.

THE bulk of mankind is as yet very far from being really civilized. The present century has somewhat softened manners and polished habits ; a thin varnish of refinement has been spread over society ; but the slightest scratching at once reveals the savage lurking underneath. We see this in the barbarous and cruel sports indulged in, not only by the masses, but by the classes ; their running after hideous shows, such as freaks of nature, which betrays a total want of taste, a disregard of human dignity ; or after dangerous performances, such as trapeze and high-rope risks, which displays the cruel instincts of the sightseers. People now use napkins and handkerchiefs, which to our ancestors were unknown ; our domestic appliances for cleanliness and decency, our sanitary arrangements, are improved, but the wild-beast cravings remain. The hideous legal punishments of the past, were they publicly carried out as formerly, would find in our day as many eager spectators as they did in previous centuries.

Let us just glance at a few of them. In another

chapter we have described the scenes occurring at public executions; they were as revolting as possible. But there were exhibitions as hideous, though they did not involve the death penalty. The pillory was in constant use. It was an upright beam raised on a platform a few feet above the street-level. On the top of this was a cross-beam, which was so arranged as to receive in a large central opening the head, and in two lateral holes the hands, of the culprit, the head and hands projecting in front, whilst his body stood behind the central post. He could only be released by the upper half of the cross-beam, which was hinged on to the lower half, being lifted up. The public amused themselves with pelting the unfortunate wretch thus exposed with dead cats and dogs, rotten eggs, filth from the gutters, cabbage-stumps, turnips, and sometimes even more dangerous missiles, such as brickbats and other hard substances. The pillory used to be set up in various parts of London—in the Stocks Market, in Pall Mall, at Charing Cross, and other places. In 1765 John Williams was set in the pillory before the gate of Westminster Hall for having published the celebrated No. 45 of Wilkes' 'North Briton.' It appears that persons so exposed were allowed certain indulgences. Thus, when Dr. Shebbeare stood in the pillory, a servant stood beside him with an umbrella to protect him from the weather, physical and moral, that was raging round him; though the Sheriff was afterwards prosecuted for having allowed this. A woman who was a notorious procuress was placed in the pillory in Pall Mall; she was pelted with rotten eggs, not only by the rabble, but by the gentry too—which was hardly

fair on the part of the latter, seeing how they had been her best patrons. Another woman, one Mother Needham, who was convicted of keeping a disorderly house in Park Place, was fined one shilling, and ordered to stand twice in the pillory. From the effects of the ill-treatment she experienced when so exposed she died shortly after.

The first person who attempted to repress the cruelties of the mob to the poor wretches in the pillory was Sir Richard Phillips, the bookseller, of New Bridge Street, the founder and editor of the *Monthly Magazine*—a man who in many respects was a reformer greatly in advance of his own times. William Prynne, for writing his ‘*Histrio-Mastix*,’ which was falsely asserted to reflect on the Queen, was kept in prison upwards of a year, then sentenced to pay a fine of £5,000, to be expelled from the University of Oxford and Lincoln’s Inn, to stand twice in the pillory, to lose his ears, and to be imprisoned for life. The sentence was rigorously executed in 1633. In 1637, he was tried by the Star Chamber for writing against episcopacy, and condemned to lose the remainder of his ears in the pillory, and to pay a further fine of £5,000. But in 1640 the Long Parliament released him, and restored him to his former academic honours. The punishment was, we think, not improperly inflicted on cheats of all descriptions—on fraudulent tradesmen, sellers of sham gold ornaments, forgers, perjurers—but its brutalizing effect on the crowd was even worse than an execution at Newgate. The latter was over in a few minutes, and was witnessed from a distance only; the exposure on the pillory lasted an hour, and sometimes longer, and



the people were in close contact with it. It was a step in advance for civilizing the people when the pillory was finally abolished by Act of Parliament on June 30, 1837.

But whilst brutal punishments were in vogue, and often inflicted on the innocent, the vilest of culprits might go scot-free as long as he could claim 'benefit of clergy,' which meant that he could prove himself a 'clerk,' that is to say, able to read. As in earlier days only priests and persons brought up by them could read, this law was of course a device of the priesthood to shield themselves and those favoured by them against conviction for crime. Whosoever could read, concerning whom the ordinary or the Clerk of the Court could say *Legit*—'He reads,' might escape punishment. Thus one Walter Beccon, who had, in 1289, robbed one Baroncin, of London, moneylender, of sixteen silver dishes, pleaded 'benefit of clergy,' and was set free. In 1345 one Thomas Harmere, accused of highway robbery, the punishment for which was then death, was acquitted, as he proved himself a 'clerk.' In 1382 two men who pleaded guilty to burglary in a goldsmith's shop also had to be acquitted on the same plea. In 1406 a man sentenced to death for burglary pleaded 'benefit of clergy,' and, of course, could not be executed. But the abuse of this privilege at last became so frequent, and in many cases was so glaring an injustice, that many Acts passed against felonies had the words added to them 'without benefit of clergy.' In treason, robbing churches, heresy—the latter two being offences against the Church itself—'benefit of clergy' was never allowed. The privilege was not abolished till the fifth year of the reign of Queen Anne.

We have seen that Prynne was condemned to have his ears cut off. This disgracing and disfiguring a man for life was one of the most cruel and senseless punishments in the penal code, which could gratify no one but the brutes who thronged around the pillory to see the mutilation performed. But the laws were Draconic, and to display at one view a few of the punishments which were then in vogue—and not only silently acquiesced in, but strongly recommended, by men whom one might suppose to be cultured and to possess ordinary human feelings, whereas they were simply murderous savages—it will be sufficient to give an extract from the report of the discussion which took place regarding the punishment to be awarded under the following circumstances: Edward Floyde, or Lloyd, of Clannemayne, in the county of Salop, Esq., who had been committed to the Fleet by the Privy Council, was impeached before the House for saying: ‘I have heard that Prague is taken, and Goodman Palsgrave and Goodwife Palsgrave have taken to their heels and run away, and, as I have heard, Goodwife Palsgrave is taken prisoner.’ [By the Goodman Palsgrave was meant the Elector Frederic, who had married Elizabeth, the daughter of James I., who here was spoken of as the Goodwife Palsgrave.] Floyde, on whom it was said beads had been found, and a monk’s girdle in his trunk, was found guilty, and he was declared a Popish wretch, dishonouring the King’s children. The punishments suggested for this were:

Robert Phillips proposed that he should be carried from Westminster, with his face to a horse’s tail, to the Tower, and there to lie in the narrow cell

known as *Little Ease*. Sir Thomas Row wished him to be whipped through London. Mr. Rainscroft proposed a fine of £1,000. Sir Francis Seymour suggested his being taken at the cart's tail to the Tower with his doubtlet off, the beads about his neck, and as many lashes by the way as beads. Sir Edward Gyles was for whipping and the pillory. Sir Francis Darcy was even more barbarous: 'Let his tongue be bored through,' he said. Sir J. Horsey suggested that his tongue should be cut out, or slit at least. Sir Edward Cecil: to bore through his tongue, and brand his forehead with a B. Sir George Goring was grimly humorous: to have him set on an ass, twelve stages as twelve beads, at every one to swallow a bead, and twelve jerks to make him.

Thus the King's Council—worthy of such a King!—advised. But they dared not brave public opinion too far, and so they contented themselves with sentencing Floyd to stand in the pillory two hours before Westminster Hall, with a paper on his hat, inscribed: 'For false, malicious, and despiteful speeches against the King's daughter and her husband,' and to ride thence on an unsaddled horse, with the tail for a bridle, to the Exchange, there to be pilloried two hours, and from there to the Fleet Prison, to stand and ride the next day, and pay a fine of £1,000. The show was no doubt very fine, and the rabble could twice exclaim: 'What a day we are having!' This occurred in 1621.

Cutting off a hand was another edifying spectacle provided for the populace. In 1579 the Duke of Anjou, brother to Henry III., King of France, wanted to marry Queen Elizabeth. John Stubbs, of Lincoln's

Inn, wrote a pamphlet against the match, which he circulated privately through Robert Page, his servant. They were both apprehended, and condemned to have their right hands cut off in the Market Place at Westminster, and the sentence was mercilessly carried out; Stubbs's hand was cut off first, and the wretched fool, when it was cut off, pulled off his hat with his left, and said with a loud voice, 'God save the Queen!' though she had paid no attention to the humble petition he had addressed to her to spare him. Page, the servant, behaved in a much more manly way. When his hand was cut off, he lifted up the stump, and said to the people: 'I have left there a true Englishman's hand,' and so went from the scaffold very stoutly and with great courage, as Camden, who was a spectator of the scene, relates. The instruments employed in this cruel punishment were a butcher's cleaver and a mallet.

After such sights, the witnessing of nose-slitting and branding with red-hot irons was but a tame affair; still, these two attentions from paternal governments, which were of pretty frequent occurrence, were gentle excitements in London life. Then, there were always a few noisy vagabonds, beggar-women, and drunken tinkers enjoying themselves in the stocks, which provided ample fun for the enlightened citizens of London. Or they might go and look at people temporarily confined in an open prison, called a cage: there was one at St. Giles's, another on London Bridge. Or they might go to St. James's Park and see soldiers, stripped quite naked, undergoing a whipping for petty offences. The quality might go to Bridewell Hospital and see the prisoners there flogged, men and women being, of

course, bare to the waist. Nowadays the quality are content to go and see charity-school children at their meals, as they go to see wild animals at feeding-time. Whipping at the cart's-tail through the public streets was another fine show, not inferior in interest to a penance procession perambulating the streets. In 1383 women who were guilty of a breach of the seventh commandment were first taken to the Tun, a prison in Cornhill, and then brought out, with their heads shaved, and led about the City in sight of all the inhabitants, with trumpets and pipes sounding before them. The same was done to priests who had broken their vow. Fancy the hilariousness of the rabble over such an exhibition! In 1440 Eleanor Cobham, Duchess of Gloucester, did penance for witchcraft. She walked from the Temple Stairs at noon, through Fleet Street, bearing a waxen taper of two pounds' weight, to St. Paul's, where she offered it at the high altar. This was on Monday; on the Wednesday following she landed at the Old Swan, and passed through Bridge Street and Gracechurch Street to Leadenhall, and at Cree Church made her second offering; and on the ensuing Friday she was put ashore at Queenhithe, whence she proceeded to St. Michael's Church, Cornhill, and so completed her penance. In each of these processions her head was covered only by a kerchief; her feet were bare; scrolls, containing a narrative of her crime, were affixed to her white dress, and she was received and attended by the Mayor, Sheriffs, and Companies of London—fools all of them for taking part in a farcical punishment for an impossible crime.

But the penance of Jane Shore must have been even

more exciting. She was taken in her kirtle only, and with a taper in her hand, to the Cathedral, and before the stone cross there had to make confession of her misconduct. Of course, a grand procession of priests and City dignitaries gave solemnity to the performance. You may imagine the ribald jokes and coarse greetings the blackguards in rags and in silk attire indulged in on the occasion. In 1552 the show was simply amusing. Sir Thomas Sowdeley, clerk, for keeping in his house a woman, whom he called his wife, was carried about the City in a cart, with basins and pans ringing before him, 'according to the laws and ancient customs of this City, in such case made, provided, and used.' If this law were still in force, it would at the present day be impossible to provide carts enough. In 1554 a female, about eighteen years of age, stood on the scaffold at St. Paul's Cross all sermon time by way of penance for an attempted imposition in counterfeiting a supernatural voice in a house without Aldersgate, by means of a whistle made for the purpose, through which the people of the whole City were wonderfully molested. Should not the idiots who were so 'molested' have done penance for their folly?

Bear- and bull-baiting, in which Queen Elizabeth took such delight,\* cock-fighting, duck-hunting—a most cruel sport, almost as cruel as the pigeon-shooting at Hurlingham and Monte Carlo—were the favourite amusements of high and low. But that crowned chimpanzee

\* Even gentle, philanthropic Edward Alleyn highly approved of bear-baiting. He owned the bear garden in Southwark, and afforded the public 'pleasant sport with the horse and ape, and whipping the blind bear,' according to his own advertisements!



James I., who for twenty-three years befouled the throne of England, provided joyous holidays for the people with his witch-weighing and witch-swimming, at which the rabble, frequently including men of position and education—as it was then understood—were allowed, nay, encouraged to practise the most diabolical cruelties on the poor victims of superstition.

Fancy what must have been the degraded state of society when people had names so repulsive and abominable that at the present day they cannot even be alluded to. Yet such names were common in the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries. What sort of women and girls were they who placidly listened to Shakespeare's plays in their coarse originality? or to those of Beaumont and Fletcher, Ford, Congreve, Wycherley, Vanbrugh?

What were the men who joined Hell-fire clubs, Mohocks, Bold Bucks, and all the other hideous associations of aristocratic ruffianism, which rendered the streets of London a danger to peaceful inhabitants and a disgrace to the country? All travellers, native and foreign, agree in saying that the rabble of London was, in the last century, the most offensive and vile to be found in any civilized country. But this rabble was, as already intimated, not composed of the scum of society only. Those who bore noble names were as bad as porters and chairmen and watermen, these latter being a set of insolent and brutal extortioners. Any man who appeared to be a foreigner was at once assailed by cries of 'French dog!' and probably pelted with mud; and as it was then the custom with men to wear breeches and white stockings, to bespatter them with dirt was,

of course, a favourite amusement of the London rough. Marshal Saxe, walking through London streets, was thus attacked by a scavenger ; it led to a dispute and a boxing bout, in which the marshal allowed the scavenger to come upon him, when he seized him by the neck and made him fly up into the air in such a direction that he fell into the middle of his cart, which was brimful of mud.

Social customs were simply disgusting. The practices at weddings were of the most indelicate character, and young maidens were the chief actors in them. Among the lower orders it was customary, on the morning after their nuptials, to rattle a peal in front of the newly-married pair. Butcher's men and boys rang their discordant cleavers with leg-bones of oxen in a sort of chime ; of course, the compliment was a kind of blackmail, since the ruffians had to be got rid of by a gift of money. Previous to the twelfth century, not only the people but even the rich were destitute of the common necessities of the table. It was not till the reign of James I. that table-forks were introduced. Before then, the fair dames of the Royal Household, as well as their lords, ate their food without such help ; they held the leg of a capon in their hand and tore the flesh from the bone with their teeth. Peter Damian, who lived in the eleventh century, mentions a two-pronged fork used by the wife of a Doge of Venice, who was so 'fastidious,' as he calls it, that she would not eat her food with her fingers, like other people, but carried it to her mouth with a fork ! Forks, indeed, came to us from Italy ; their use was at first assumed to indicate a fop, who was greeted with the nickname of *furcifer*.

Jonas Hanway (died 1786) was the first man who ventured to walk about London with an umbrella over his head. Gay, in his 'Trivia,' had indeed referred to the earlier use of an umbrella by tucked-up sempstresses and walking maids, but even with this class it was a winter privilege only, and woe to the woman of a better sort, or to the man of any condition, who dared so to invade the rights of coachmen and chairmen! But Hanway steadily underwent all the staring, jeering, and bullying, and having punished some insolent knaves who struck him, he finally succeeded in overcoming the prejudice against the umbrella. The small wits of the time vainly expended their feeble satire on it, as they always do on anything they are not accustomed to; as, for instance, they now do on the soft sombrero, to wear which instead of the ugly chimney-pot they, in their hideous slang, call 'bad form.'

We have only to look at the drawings of Hogarth to see what a set of savages the people of his time were, for the artist painted his contemporaries. Study Plate III. of the 'Idle Apprentice,' or Plate VI., representing the marriage of the industrious apprentice, or the banquet shown on Plate VIII. of the same series, and who would now care to associate with the brutes there depicted? Look at the rabble on Plate XI., the 'Idle Apprentice's Execution,' or on the plate in the Hudibras series, 'Burning the Rumps'; are those men and women human? What a condition of society does Plate VI. of the 'Rake's Progress' represent! What barbarity in the treatment of the insane is shown on Plate VIII.! In the plate representing the 'Midnight Conversation' Hogarth perfectly revels in the hideous

and repulsive, but he shows society as it was ; most of the figures are real portraits. The man who ladles out the punch is Orator Henley, of Clare Market fame ; the man next to him is Kettleby, a well-known lawyer. As to the others, they have not been satisfactorily identified, but they represent types of society men.

As to personal liberty, ruthless Governments were constantly invading it. How men were impressed to serve in the navy is well known ; but even singing children could be torn from their parents to become choristers in the royal chapels. In 1550 a commission was granted to a gentleman of the Privy Chamber to take for the King's use in any churches or chapels as many singing children and choristers as he thought good. Similarly, men were impressed for the army. In 1596, on April 11, being Easter Day, the doors of the parish churches were closed, and one thousand men pressed to be soldiers, furnished with arms, and despatched to Dover, and thence to France.

Let us congratulate ourselves that we have outlived those days of savagery, though a great deal of that undesirable commodity remains yet to be exterminated. In 1834 a German named Steinberg murdered in Southampton Street, Pentonville, a woman and her four children, and then committed suicide. After the funeral an exhibition was opened at Steinberg's house, where a sham bloody knife and wax figures of the murdered persons were exhibited. Not long ago a real corpse was made a show of at Olympia—and this in England, and in this century ! Shall we ever be really civilized ?

## XIV.

### LONDON IN EARTHQUAKE, TEMPEST, AND FLOOD.

**L**ONDON, as we have seen in former chapters, has frequently been depopulated by plagues, and has had its dwellings destroyed by vast conflagrations. It has also suffered terribly from earthquakes, tempests, and floods. Now, floods can be prevented by dams, embankments, flood-gates, storm-sewers, and other means, such as have been adopted within recent times. But against earthquakes and hurricanes man can furnish no protection ; he can only watch the havoc as it proceeds, and afterwards attempt to repair the damage. London has often suffered from these calamities. In recent days we have become so unused to the idea of an earthquake in London, that the mere idea of such an occurrence seems absurd. Yet there have been earthquakes in London. The earliest on record is a purely legendary one, probably a monkish invention, according to which a pagan temple to Apollo, which stood on Thorney Island,\* was overthrown by an earthquake;

\* Thorney Island was formed by the Thames entering by a creek where Richmond Terrace now stands, passing along

when Sibert, the first Christian King of Essex, at the instigation of Bishop Melitus, undertook to build a church, dedicated to St. Peter, on the same spot. The saint seemed to take great interest in this new church, for he revisited the earth to consecrate it. He hailed a boat on the Surrey side, was ferried across, and rewarded the boatman by a miraculous haul of salmon, and duly performed the ceremony. But the saint, always anxious for the welfare of his beloved monks, annexed to the fine haul the condition that thenceforth the Thames fishermen were to give a tenth of every catch to the monastery—a claim which the monks occasionally enforced by legal means.

In a *Life of the three first Norman Kings of England*, printed at London in 1613, by 'R. B.,' we read that in the fifteenth year of William Rufus (1100) a great earthquake happened in England in the month of April; 'strange it was for the strong trembling of the earth, but more strange for the doleful and hideous roaring which it yielded forth.' Though no precise locality is mentioned, as the preceding and following paragraphs refer to London, it may reasonably be assumed that this does also. The record does not say whether any damage was done.

The next earthquake in London occurred in 1247, when, on February 13, there was, according to Stow, 'a great earthquake in many places of England, especially at London, about the banks of the Thames, destroying many houses. In 1275 a similar event took place in

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Gardener's Lane, thence southwards along Princes Street and Dean's Yard, and turning sharply eastward along College Street and across Abingdon Street into the Thames again.



London and other parts of the country, overthrowing abundance of houses and many churches.' During the Plantagenet period (1154-1485) the inhabitants of London were, in fact, kept in constant alarm by panic-mongers, who predicted great storms and earthquakes. One of the latter was to be particularly destructive in its effects: the whole valley of the Thames was once more to be an estuary of the sea. The worthy head of a London religious house was so alarmed at the prophecy that he built himself a tabernacle upon one of the slopes of Harrow Hill.

During the reign of Elizabeth also, even those who basked in the sunshine of the Court lived, as we are told in the Weekly Edition of the *Times*, April 25, 1884, in a vague and superstitious dread of calamities, which would ensue on the appearance of comets and eclipses and the occurrence of earthquakes, as if they portended wars, or famines, or fevers. And, indeed, we have records of three earthquakes during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, though only one of them proved serious in its consequences. The first of these three earthquakes occurred on April 6, 1580. The time is not mentioned; and though its duration did not exceed a minute, the shock was so severe that many churches and houses were much shattered, and several people killed. 'The great clock bell in the palace of Westminster spoke of itself against the hammer with shaking, as divers clocks and bells in the City and elsewhere did the like,' says Stow. In 1597 a slight shock of an earthquake was felt in London on Christmas Eve; and a similarly harmless shock occurred, curiously enough, on Christmas Eve of 1601.

On September 8, 1692, an earthquake was felt about two o'clock in the afternoon in London as well as in Paris, but it passed off without doing any damage. On February 8, 1750, the shock of an earthquake was felt along the banks of the Thames from Greenwich to near Richmond. At Limehouse and Poplar several chimneys were thrown down by it, and in several parts of London the furniture was shaken ; at Hampstead and Highgate it was also very perceptible. A second and more violent shock occurred between five and six o'clock in the morning, the air being very warm, and the atmosphere clear, though till within a few minutes preceding there had been a strong but confused lightning darting its flashes in quick succession. The violence of the motion caused many people to start from their beds and fly into the streets, under the impression that their houses were falling. In St. James's Park, and the squares and open spaces about the West End, where the shock is assumed to have been most powerful, the tremulous vibration of the earth was clearly distinguishable. It seemed to move in a south and north direction, with a quick return towards the centre, and was accompanied by a loud noise of a rushing wind. The damage was confined to the shaking down of chimneys and some old houses.\* A crazy Lifeguardsman prophesied that as the second earthquake had happened exactly four weeks after the first, so there would be a third exactly four weeks after the second, which would entirely destroy

\* The shock was distinctly felt at Lambeth, where the roof of a pottery was thrown down. The fishermen on the river thought that a porpoise or other large fish had got under their boat.

London. So strong is the tendency in some to believe the most absurd statements of arrant charlatans, that this prediction filled London with dismay. Vast multitudes left London for the country, and the fields around were crowded with fugitives from the threatened catastrophe. And even after the momentous day had passed by without the sign of an earthquake, it took some time to restore public confidence. The author of the confusion was subsequently confined in a mad-house.

The latest earthquake which in any way affected London is that which occurred on April 22, 1884. The sharpest shock was felt in Essex, where damage to the amount of about £10,000 was done by it. But it was also appreciably felt in the Metropolis, though in various degrees, in the City, near the Law Courts, at Westminster, Oxford Street, Pimlico, and Brixton. Six workmen were engaged on repairs in one of the pinnacles of the Victoria Tower at Westminster, when they were all greatly alarmed at a sudden undulatory motion. They collected together, and, another shock coming on, they withdrew from the pinnacle to the roof of the tower, near the flagstaff; here they felt the tower still vibrate: and they immediately reported the matter, attributing the shaking of the tower to the wind. But they were told that no wind that ever blew could affect so massive a structure, and on their return to their work they were no further disturbed. At such a height as that of the roof of the Victoria Tower the vibration must, of course, have been very great. At a printing-office in Hatton Garden it was so strongly felt that the workmen began rushing downstairs, think-

ing the building was collapsing. They also were at work at a considerable height—the fifth floor.

Let us now see what havoc has been wrought in London by storms.

In the year 1090 upwards of six hundred houses and many churches were blown down in London by a tremendous hurricane, which occurred in the month of November; and the White Square Tower, built by William I., was much shaken. The wind broke down part of the wall of Bow Church, whereby two men were killed, and raising the roof, carried it a considerable way, when it fell with such violence that six of its rafters, each twenty-six feet long, were forced into the ground about twenty feet deep. What would be impossible now was not so then. At that time Cheapside was not paved, and the ground was of a marshy character.

In 1439 many houses were unroofed, and Old Change nearly demolished, by a high wind, and in 1444 a great storm struck down the lofty steeple of St. Paul's, which, however, on this occasion was rebuilt.

In 1561 a terrific storm burst over London. The church of St. Martin, Ludgate Hill, was struck by lightning, and so also was the steeple of St. Paul's, which, being of wood covered with lead, caught fire, and was burnt down, the débris causing much damage to the church. This time the steeple was not rebuilt, but the roof was repaired. Towards its cost Queen Elizabeth gave one thousand marks, also a thousand loads of timber. The restoration seems to have been imperfectly done, for in 1620 King James I. had his attention called to the ruinous condition of the edifice. A royal commission

was appointed to consider measures towards restoring the church. Inigo Jones was the architect. But the raising of the funds proved difficult, and nothing was done for eight years. Charles I. issued another commission in 1631. Among the contributors Sir Paul Pindar, the wealthy merchant of Bishopsgate, gave about £10,000. Charles II., after his restoration, in 1663, issued a commission for the repairs of the church, and gave £1,000 towards the fund. Sir Christopher Wren was appointed architect, and presented his report for repairing the cathedral on May 1, 1666—which was agreed to on Monday, August 27; but on Sunday, September 2, the Great Fire broke out, which entirely destroyed the cathedral, and put an end to all schemes for its restoration.

Pepys thus describes a storm through which he passed on January 24, 1665-1666 :

‘The wind being very furious, we durst not go by water [from Deptford to London], no boat being able to stir. So we walked to London, and so strong was the wind that in the fields we many times could not carry our bodies against it, but were driven backwards. . . . It was dangerous to walk the streets, the bricks and tiles falling from the houses; . . . and whole chimneys, nay, whole houses in two or three places, blowed down. But above all, the pales of London Bridge on both sides were blown away, so that we were fain to stoop very low for fear of blowing off the bridge. We could see no boats in the Thames afloat, but what were broke loose, and carried through the bridge, it being ebbing water. And the greatest sight of all was among other parcels of ships driven here and there in

clusters together, one was quite overset, and lay with her masts all along in the water, and keel above water.'

But an even fiercer storm swept over London in 1703. It began about ten o'clock on the night of November 16, and continued to rage with the utmost violence till seven the next morning, when it gradually abated. The damage sustained by the City alone was estimated at £2,000,000 sterling, and vast loss was suffered in other parts of the Metropolis. Upwards of two thousand stacks of chimneys were blown down, the lead on the top of several churches was rolled up like skins of parchment, and at Westminster Abbey, Christ's Hospital, St. Andrew's, Holborn, and many other places, it was carried off from the buildings. The roof of the guard-room at Whitehall was entirely carried away, two newly-built turrets on the church of St. Mary, Aldermanbury, one of the spires of St. Saviour's, Southwark, and the four pinnacles on the tower of St. Michael's, Crooked Lane, were wholly blown down; the vanes and spindles of the weathercocks were bent in many places; several houses near Moorfields were levelled with the ground, as were about twenty others in the out-parts, with a great number of brick walls, and gable ends of houses innumerable. Twenty-one persons were killed by the fall of the ruins, and about two hundred others were gravely injured. All the ships in the river Thames between London Bridge and Limehouse, except four, were broken from their moorings and thrown on shore. Upwards of four hundred wherries were entirely lost, more than sixty barges were driven foul of London Bridge, and as many more were either sunk or staved between the bridge and Hammersmith, and many lives



lost thereby. At sea twelve men-of-war, with upwards of eighteen hundred men on board, perished within sight of their own shore, and a great number of merchantmen were also lost. The demand for bricklayers to repair the damage on land so far exceeded the supply that for a long time after the storm many persons had to find shelter under sailcloths, tarpaulins, and other temporary cover. In the country the hurricane blew down more than four hundred windmills, and more than nineteen thousand trees in the county of Kent. A sermon is still annually preached at the mission chapel in Little Wild Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, in commemoration of this great storm.

Another terrible storm visited London in 1734. It threw down houses and stacks of chimneys, shattered windows, and in St. James's Park thirty-six trees were broken down or torn up by the roots. Among them was one of the oldest and largest trees in the park which stood near the entrance into the Mall from St. James's Palace. A sentry-box placed under it was blown down at the same time with the sentry in it, who narrowly escaped with his life. A farmer was blown off his horse into Tyburn Pond and drowned. Another storm, memorable enough to be recorded, occurred in the night between January 3 and 4, 1738; and another in the night between September 10 and 11 in the following year, by which many houses were unroofed and chimneys blown down. An uncommon effect was produced on the birds: at Mile End Turnpike, where there was a grove of trees, the ground was covered with heaps of dead sparrows, which had for years bred in those trees; probably the lightning, which was truly

awful during that night, killed them. The following year, 1740, London was visited by a hurricane between five in the afternoon and eleven at night; many chimneys were blown down, tops of houses uncovered, and several persons buried under the ruins. One of the spires of Westminster Abbey was destroyed, and havoc spread everywhere.

The last century certainly was an unfavourable one for London with regard to storms; for in 1742 it was again ravaged by a hurricane, which on September 8 uncovered houses, threw down chimneys, tore up trees, and destroyed much shipping on the Thames. Again, in 1752, on March 15, a storm of equal violence arose, in which many people were killed or wounded by falling roofs and chimneys. It was followed in 1756, on June 2, by another storm equally destructive; and on February 12 and 15, 1760, by storms in which many persons lost their lives, and again on January 14, 1764, by a storm, during which a fire broke out near Hyde Park Corner, which destroyed seven houses. On December 23, 1790, the last we shall mention, so great a storm broke over London, that the copper covering of the new Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, was blown off in one sheet, and hung over the front like a large carpet or mainsail, and the noise occasioned by this accident made the neighbourhood conclude that the building was falling down. Some of the plates composing this covering were torn off and carried over the tall houses intervening into a yard in Holborn.

We have left ourselves but little space to speak of floods from which London has suffered; we shall confine ourselves to the most important of them.

In 1090 London Bridge was carried away by a flood caused by the storm in the same year mentioned above. In 1236 wherries were rowed in the midst of Westminster Hall, and eight years after the Hall was similarly inundated. In 1547, on September 4, so much rain fell that it filled the streets with water, and caused the Wallbrook to run down Dowgate Hill in such a volume and with such force and rapidity that a young man who attempted to cross the brook was drowned. In 1555, on the occasion of the Lord Mayor presenting the Sheriffs to the Barons of the Exchequer, the rain fell in such torrents that Westminster Hall was full of water, and boats were rowed into King Street from a temporary timber landing-place.

On February 5, 1579, such a quantity of snow fell in London that it lay two feet deep in the shallowest places, and double that height in parts where it had been driven. When the thaw came, which was accompanied by incessant rain, such high floods were caused that the marshes and low grounds became a lake, and the water again invaded Westminster Hall, and rose so high that, when it fell again, a number of fish were left stranded in the Hall.

In 1621 an extraordinary tide was seen in the river Thames; it flowed and ebbed four times within four hours. In 1734 the storm which occurred in that year, and which we mentioned above, caused disastrous floods in London and its neighbourhood; in many localities people were compelled to take refuge in upper floors, the lower being inundated. In 1762, in consequence of long-continuing rains, a high tide in the river Thames, and a strong gale, the rivers within twenty miles of

London were, on September 27, so raised 'that the like had never been known in the memory of man'; the damage suffered on the Thames and the river Lea was almost incredible. In less than five hours the water rose twelve feet in vertical height. Most of the cattle in the fields were carried off; likewise stacks of hay and timber; hogs, horses, and other animals were drowned in their stables and yards. At Stratford the flood reached the upper floors, and the surface of the water was covered with the bodies of animals that had perished. People were lost in the high roads.. A woman and a horse, a gentleman in a post-chaise, with the horses and post-boy, all perished in the water; three passengers in the Bury coach, with two of the horses, were also drowned. The calico grounds at Stratford were all overflowed, and great quantities of linen carried off. The houses from Bow Bridge to Stratford were all under water, and the inhabitants forced to get in and out at their windows. Of course, the residents in the low lands on the Surrey side of the river, as also those in Westminster and Pimlico, were great sufferers by this flood, and the possibility of the recurrence of such calamities was not averted till very recent times by the raising of river walls, embankments, and better drainage. There are many persons now living who, like the present writer, have seen the low-lying parts of Lambeth inundated to such an extent that houses had to be visited in boats.

## XV.

### THE GROWTH OF LONDON : PAST AND PRESENT.

**L**ONDON is like Topsy—it ‘grewed,’ and, like the young giantess recently exhibited, ‘is still growing.’ When and where will this growth stop? Examine old maps and records, and you will find the increase astounding. For centuries, indeed, the size of London remained almost stationary; from the time of the Romans to the end of the Saxon rule, only the eastern half of central London, from the Tower to the Fleet River, was in existence; and it took five centuries and a half to extend London to Westminster—the London of Queen Elizabeth. This slow progress, of course, was due to many causes: absence of population; the obstacles presented by nature, of which the forest to the north and the swamp to the south were two. Forests are not cleared, nor marshes laid dry, without much labour and time. Terrible fires repeatedly destroyed a great part of the then existing buildings, and their restoration was a task which had to precede and thus impede extension; fearful plagues decimated the

inhabitants, and thus paralyzed enterprise, and rendered additional houses for the time unnecessary ; and finally, in those early days, there was a strong prejudice against the increase of the size of London, as we shall see further on. But it is advisable to enter into fuller details.

Before there was any London, the site of it was covered, on the northern bank of the Thames, from Ratcliff to Westminster, by a forest abounding in wild animals ; east of Ratcliff and west of Westminster was swamp. The southern side was also a swamp or marshy ground, still commemorated by Lambeth Marsh, which at high tide formed a lake, extending to the Surrey Hills, from which descended several rivulets into the river Thames. The Romans came ; in early Roman times London extended from the Tower to the Wallbrook, with a few buildings in Southwark ; the surrounding was forest and swamp. Eventually the Romans got as far as the Fleet River. The Saxons began to creep up the hill on the western side of the Fleet, but it was not till after the Norman Conquest that Fleet Street, the Strand, and parts of Westminster began to be built on. Westminster Abbey on Thorney Island stood for centuries in solitary grandeur far away from London. In the Tudor period London was still a comparatively small town. There were a few houses scattered here and there outside the City walls ; the religious houses of Clerkenwell were surrounded by fields ; a cluster of houses might be seen in Moorfields and Finsbury Fields ; north of Holborn all was open country, and so from Temple Bar up to St. Giles's and beyond. St. Martin's Church then really stood in the



Fields. The Haymarket was a country lane bordered by hedges, with meadows on both sides. Up to the middle of the last century London extended from east to west from the Tower to Westminster only, and from the river to the old City wall and Holborn only towards the north. What was the extent of London in the time of Henry VIII. we gather from a proclamation for the preservation of the game therein mentioned, within the Honour of the Palace of Westminster. Hares, partridges, pheasants, and herons are to be preserved from the palace at Westminster to St. Giles's-in-the Fields, and thence to Islington, to our Lady of the Oak, to Highgate, to Hornsey Park, to Hampstead Heath, and thence to the palace at Westminster, 'for his own disport, pleasure, and recreation, and therefore charges and commandeth all and singular his subjects, that they nor any of them do presume or attempt to hunt or to hawk within the precincts aforesaid, as they tender his favour or eschew the imprisonment of their bodies, and further punishment at His Majesty's will and pleasure.' Our old Kings addressed their subjects as if they were a parcel of wretched slaves, which in some things, indeed, they were.

During the reign of Elizabeth London began to expand, at which Her Majesty was very much alarmed, so that in 1580, by a proclamation dated at Nonsuch, all persons were prohibited from building houses within three miles of any of the City gates, and various other regulations were ordered to be enforced to prevent any further resort of people to the capital from distant parts of the country. It was feared that it would be difficult to keep a larger number of inhabitants in

order, and to supply them with food, fuel, and other necessities ; there was also a dread of spreading the plague. This mandate evidently proved inefficacious, for in 1602 another proclamation for restraining building in London was issued. Stow says that about this time (before 1600) there was not only a great augmentation of buildings in every part of the vicinity, but likewise within the walls of London itself, where the sites of many large mansions had been covered with lesser edifices. The above-mentioned second proclamation also ordered that not more than one family was to live in a house ; that empty houses, erected within seven years, were not to be let, and that unfinished houses on new foundations were to be pulled down. These regulations were precise and strict enough, but they failed to arrest the natural increase of a city so favourably situate as is London. If you turn a terrestrial globe till its upper half shows you all the land of our earth excepting Australia, you will find that London occupies the very centre of the habitable part of the world, forming, as it were, the universal centre of attraction, political, commercial, and intellectual. Hence its own action is centripetal and centrifugal ; it collects and disperses ; it becomes the emporium of the world. A city so placed must grow in spite of short-sighted legal enactments and hindrances. And so London grew.

At the beginning of the reign of James I. there was an enormous consumption of timber in the Metropolis, which rendered the material scarce for shipping, wherefore in 1607 all new buildings were again prohibited within one mile of the City, and it was ordered that ‘for decency, as by reason that all great and well-

grown woods were much spent and wasted, all persons thenceforth should build their forefronts and windows either of brick or stone.' Among the reasons alleged for limiting the increase of buildings was the sapient King's remark that the growth of the capital 'resembled that of the head of a rickety child, in which an extensive influx of humour drained and impoverished the extremities, and at the same time generated distemper in the overloaded part.' He paid no compliment to his country by calling it 'rickety,' though he unconsciously spoke the truth; the country was so through his own fault. But there was undoubtedly truth in his allegation that attracting too great a population to the capital is injurious to the extremities of the country. We have plenty of proof of this at the present, for which our cranky educational system is largely answerable: every country schoolmaster's assistant who thinks he has mastered the three R's fancies he has only to come to London to secure a lucrative appointment.

When, in the reign of James I., Lincoln's Inn Fields began to be built over—which did not please the Benchers of the Inn—they applied to the King, and he, at their solicitation, in 1610, issued a mandate to certain magistrates of Middlesex, stating that it was his express pleasure and commandment that the erection of new buildings in Lincoln's Inn Fields should be restrained, and ordering the said justices to apprehend and commit to gaol any who should be found so offending. But building went on all the same in the locality, so that even in Cromwell's time (1657) a Bill was passed for preventing the increase of building, though an exception was made in favour of the Earl of Clare,

who was allowed to erect the market bearing his name. The Earl himself lived close by in a 'princely mansion,' of which no trace now remains, nor is any view of it known to exist. And no house could be built in or about the suburbs of London without assigning to it four acres of ground, under a penalty of £100. But the ordinance was disregarded.

We hear of no further prohibitions against building after the one of the date above mentioned; the West End houses gradually spread from St. Martin's Lane to Park Lane in the west, and in 1745 had reached up to Oxford Street, with a few buildings to the north of it. But even in 1798 we find in the *Times* a house advertised as to be let on lease, situate immediately opposite Great Portland Street, and commanding a view of the country between Hampstead and Highgate, remarkably airy and pleasant. The streets and squares beyond the present Regent Street and Park Lane have undergone little change since then, but the more eastern portion of the area has greatly altered in its aspect. Where now Regent Street forms a wide avenue from St. James's to the Regent's Park there existed a number of crooked and narrow streets; and the long but narrow street which ran from Piccadilly to Oxford Street was then called Swallow Street—the commencement of which still exists in Piccadilly. But though the western streets have since being built undergone little change, the sites on which they stand have totally altered in character; one instance will suffice. The present Mayfair, which preserves its aristocratic flavour in spite of grander buildings now hemming it in, was a large open space covered with dunghills and all sorts of filth and rubbish. James II.

granted permission for a fair to be held there, to begin on May 1 and to last fifteen days. It became the scene of the most fearful debauchery, and was suppressed in 1708, but was revived some years afterwards, and not finally abolished till towards the end of the last century. We are not here concerned with the character of a neighbourhood, but merely adduce the above instance to show how the growth of London may affect it, and sometimes totally alter it.

From the middle of the last century to the earlier years of this there was but little building going on; but houses were erected between the City and Clerkenwell, in which latter locality the site of St. John's Priory and its grounds and gardens had been built over in 1721 by a builder named Mitchell, who afterwards sold the estate to the commissioners for building fifty new churches. They turned the chapel of the Knights Hospitallers into the church of St. John, Clerkenwell, which had been erected into a new parish—a circumstance which had led to great building activity in that quarter. Besides the building towards Clerkenwell just mentioned, houses also sprang up to the north of Holborn and Oxford Street towards the New Road, or Euston and Marylebone Roads of the present day. Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens to the west of Park Lane, and Regent's Park to the north of the New Road, were laid out as we see them now. The growth of London hitherto, as shown, was chiefly north and westward, but between 1820 and 1840 the only increase to the north-west was a cluster of houses around Lisson Grove, and to the south-west between the gardens of Buckingham Palace and Sloane Street, or the present Pimlico. To the

north also houses arose up to King's Cross and up to the City Road. But a new suburb came into existence to the east of London, between Whitechapel and Blackwall—a circumstance due chiefly to the enormous docks which about that time were erected there. And to the south of London, between the Thames to the west and the narrow fringe of houses along the river at Bankside to the north, and as far as Bermondsey and the middle of the Old Kent Road to the east, and to the south as far as the Grand Junction Canal, and Walworth to the west, an entirely new town sprang up: Lambeth, Kennington, the northern portion of Brixton, Walworth, the Wandsworth Road came into existence. The new district in most parts was a poor one, chiefly inhabited by the working classes, whom the freeing of Blackfriars Bridge from toll in 1785 and cheap rents drew to it.

From about 1840 to 1870 London's great expansion commenced. It threw out feelers in all directions into the country. To the north it invaded the land west of the Edgware Road, and, north of the Regent's Canal, crept up to the east of the Edgware Road as far as Hampstead, with a fringe of houses along the Hampstead and Kentish Town Roads up to Highgate, and along the Camden Road up to Crouch End; whilst along the Kingsland Road London reached Stamford Hill, and descending the Upper Clapton Road, it came on the east down to the recently-built hamlet of Homerton, and spread along the Commercial Road nearly to the canal called the Lea Cut. To the west Kensington and Notting Hill became, from a mere number of houses, new towns. Earl's Court and the King's Road were



built upon. To the south, Greenwich and the Peckham Road suburbs arose. The Clapham Road was lined with houses down to Tooting, and the Brixton Road to Streatham, whilst Tulse Hill reached Upper Norwood, and Forest Hill and Sydenham began to be built over. Lewisham and Lee also became connected by continuous lines of houses with London, and the environs of Woolwich grew into a new town.

These irregular buildings, erected without a comprehensive plan, a well-concerted scheme, of course left many gaps, most of which have gradually been filled up by successive builders; and as we look at the map of London now, we find it to be a pretty compact, almost circular town, allowing for excrescences here and indentations there. From 1870 to the present time the growth of London has been incessant, and, though still unsystematic, not without the compensation we desire from variety. Not that there is much of that in the buildings themselves; it is more in their distribution, arising from the number of builders, all working independently of one another. Unfortunately, they have no invention, and so they constantly reproduce the same dreary, monotonous villas and terraces, all cast in the same mould. Now and then we see an attempt at picturesqueness combined with comfort, as at Bedford Park, or the new houses at Chelsea; but such instances are rare. From 1870, or perhaps a few years earlier, building around London has been incessant, in all directions, too—north and south, east and west. To the north, along Edgware Road, Brondesbury has arisen; the space left between the Kentish Town and Camden Roads has been filled up, and so has

that between the Hornsey and Kingsland Roads, as also between the Kingsland and Clapton Roads. To the east we find the new suburb of Bromley. The once desolate Isle of Dogs is now the home of many manufacturing industries. Many new streets have arisen east of the Isle, and the buildings surrounding Woolwich have greatly increased in number. Most of the gaps left by the first builder, who merely followed the lines of the southern roads in Surrey and Kent, are now filled up with houses. Thus the enormous space originally left empty between the Clapham and Lewisham Roads is now a compact mass of houses, and, not satisfied with filling up vacancies, the enterprising builder has boldly pushed down south and turned the groves of Anerley into streets and lanes, much to the sorrow of the lovers of rural scenes. That wonderful network of railway lines at Clapham Junction has created a new town in the locality. The beautiful valley running from Battersea to Balham Hill, which about twenty years ago was one of the most lovely landscapes near London, with a bright stream running through it, is now thickly covered with small houses, one street being the exact counterpart of the other. The stream is dried up, as is the beauty which once graced the spot. From the river Wandle houses are slowly advancing eastwards to Putney Heath. To the west of London the increase has not been so great. Some vacant ground north of Fulham has been covered with houses, as also have been spaces north and south of the Hammersmith Road, and so has a large plot north of the Uxbridge Road, between that and the Regent's Canal.

Such has been the growth of London: from the small enclosure of walls from the Tower to the Wallbrook, it has expanded to cover now, with its substantially-built houses, churches, palaces, and hovels—for such there are even in London!—upwards of 680 square miles. The new houses built since 1849, and up to and including the year 1897, number 633,615, and the whole population exceeds five millions. In the whole history of the world, as far as it is possible to ascertain it, there is no parallel to such a town and such a population. If James I. could be resuscitated—it is a lucky thing he cannot—what would he say now?—he who, when London did not go farther north than Holborn, when it extended only to Charing Cross in the west, to the Tower in the east, whilst the river formed its southern boundary, protested so vehemently against the increase of the size of London, which in 1637 was computed to contain about 145,000 inhabitants, which number in 1661, four years before the Great Plague, had risen to 384,000—not a tenth of the present population! What would he say now, seeing this gigantic head confidently and nobly carried by the body?

The greatest evil of the unprecedented growth of London is the fact that it pushes the country farther and farther out, necessitating a long journey through bricks and mortar before you can reach it. Hence, if we do not wish to forget altogether what grass and trees and pure air are like, the need of preserving from the builder's invasion open spaces, where these three requisites of a healthy life may still be found in our midst. This is a need fortunately now widely recognised, and zealous efforts to supply it are not wanting. Such

recreation grounds for the public are more wanted than are many other objects upon which money is spent—money which would be more usefully applied to rendering London bright and healthy, so that Ouida could no longer call it ‘horrid’—an epithet that may only too justly be conferred at present upon some parts of it.

## XVI.

### LONDON CONFLAGRATIONS FROM 764 TO 1800.

IF anything were wanted to show the tremendous vitality of London, we need only point to the terribly calamitous visitations from which at various times it has triumphantly emerged. Amidst these visitations plagues and fires have been the most severe and destructive. Plagues we have discussed in another chapter ; let us here discuss fires. No city ever suffered more from them than London. Nor can we wonder at their frequency if we consider the style of building prevalent in Old London : wooden houses, with overhanging fronts, desiccated timbers, steep and awkward staircases ; narrow streets, inadequate means of extinguishing fires, and the absence of men properly trained for the work, render it marvellous that, when a fire did break out, it did not at once spread in all directions. We know how difficult we find it—with our modern appliances, powerful steam-engines, trained and heroic firemen, a plentiful supply of water, and houses supposed to be fireproof—to stop a conflagration ; hence the long list of serious London fires which we are about to give. As the chronological order seems the most

convenient, we adopt it, prefixing the date of its occurrence to every fire. Of course, small fires of one or even two or three houses will not be included in this list, except where public or other important buildings were involved in the calamity.

764.—London nearly destroyed by great fires, traces of which, in charred wood and other remains, lying above the Roman relics, are frequently met with in excavations.

798.—Another fire, in which many of the inhabitants perished in the flames of their wooden houses in narrow streets.

852.—The Danes pillage and lay waste by fire London and Canterbury.

893.—Alfred the Great, having repaired and beautified London, the town was again ravaged and almost entirely destroyed by fire. Alfred adopted bricks and stone as the material for rebuilding his city; but, unfortunately, they were not universally employed.

961.—The church of St. Paul burnt, and rebuilt the same year. It was built of wood.

982.—Whilst London was afflicted with a scarcity of provisions and a mortal sickness, the greater part of it was destroyed by a conflagration.

1066.—Southwark was burnt by William the Conqueror as a gentle hint to the citizens of London of what they might expect if they hesitated to open their gates to him. They took the hint.

1077.—The greatest part of the city laid in ashes. The English looked upon the French followers of William I. with suspicion, hence riots and insurrections, to control which William built the White



Tower, as a retreat for the royal family in case of need.

1086.—A terrible fire, which began at Ludgate and raged through the greatest and most opulent part of the city. It destroyed the cathedral of St. Paul; but Maurice, the Bishop of London, immediately began raising the new cathedral, which stood till the Great Fire, six hundred years afterwards.

1092.—London having in 1090 suffered from a hurricane, which blew down about six hundred houses and many churches, was visited by a fire, which destroyed a great part of the city.

1093.—Another great fire, in which six hundred houses were burnt. There was at the same time great scarcity of provisions, and taxes were most oppressive.

1102.—London twice burnt: showing how quickly the houses were rebuilt, and of what combustible materials they consisted, in spite of Alfred's regulations.

1113.—The Tower partially destroyed by fire.

1131.—London entirely destroyed by fire.

1136.—A fire which began at London Bridge, and destroyed all the houses westward to St. Clement Danes, and all the way east to Aldgate. London Bridge, which was then of wood, was also entirely consumed.

1191.—Frequent fires, which induced FitzAlwyn, the first Mayor, to renew Alfred's order that houses should be built with stone or brick, and covered with roofs of tiles or slates.

1212.—A fire broke out in Southwark. A great number of people thronged the bridge, helpers and

loafers, when the north part of it was set on fire, as also the south part, so that the people were caught between two fires, and had no means of escape except by the boats which came to take them off. But the crowd rushed into them amidst such confusion that the boats were upset and the people drowned. When the fire had subsided the charred bodies of about three thousand persons were found on the bridge—and this occurred only three years after it had been finished.

1220.—Great fire, which consumed a portion of the City.

1227.—Another great fire, equally destructive, in the midst of which the King—Henry III.—extorted from the citizens the sum of £20,000 to ‘redeem his favour.’

1446.—The steeple of St. Paul’s, the highest in Europe, being 520 feet high, was set on fire by lightning. It was repaired in 1462.

1483.—Fire in Leadenhall, which was built in 1419 by Alderman Sir Symon Eyre for a public granary. It was totally destroyed, as also were many houses, and all the stocks for guns, and other like provisions belonging to the City.

1503.—Destruction by fire of many houses at the north end of London Bridge on November 21; and on January 7, 1504, some houses were burnt in Thames Street.

1512.—Great part of the Palace of Westminster burnt, and not rebuilt; only the Great Hall, with adjoining offices, being kept in repair. In the same year there was a fire in the Tower, which burnt the chapel in the White Tower.

1534.—Burning of the mews at Charing Cross.

1561.—In this year the steeple of St. Paul's was again struck by lightning. The fire burned downwards for four hours; the roof fell in; bells and lead were melted, and poured in torrents down into the church. But within the same year the church was restored, though the spire was not rebuilt.

1619.—The old Banqueting House, Whitehall Palace, burnt.

1632.—On February 13 a fire destroyed the buildings on London Bridge from the north end to the first vacancy. Forty-two houses were consumed.

1633.—On February 11 a fire broke out at the house of a needle-maker near St. Magnus's Church, at the north end of the bridge, occasioned by the carelessness of a maid-servant setting a tub of hot coal under a staircase. It raged with great fierceness through the night and next day, till all the houses, forty-three in number, were destroyed to the first vacancy on the bridge, which was at the seventh pier. The north end was left unbuilt on for many years, though deal boards were put up on both sides to prevent people falling into the Thames.

1664.—Under August 20 in this year Pepys records in his Diary: 'I walked to Cheapside to see the effect of a fire there this morning since four o'clock, which I find in the house of Mr. Bois, that married Dr. Fuller's niece, who are both out of town, leaving only a man and a maid. It began in their house, and has burned much and many houses backwards, though none forwards, and that in the great uniform pile of buildings in the middle of Cheapside.'

1666.—The history of the Great Fire of London of

this year is so well known that, for the sake of uniformity only, we give the following details: It began at the house of one Farryner, the King's baker, in Pudding Lane, near Fish Street Hill; it quickly spread into Lower Thames Street, nearly all the contiguous houses being of timber, lath, and plaster; thence it extended westward. Within the walls it consumed almost five-sixths of the whole City, and without the walls it cleared a space as extensive as one-sixth part left unburnt within. Scarcely a single building which came within the range of the flames was left standing. Public edifices, churches, and dwelling-houses were alike consumed, and allowing for irregularities, the fire spread its ravages over a space of ground equal to an oblong square of a mile and a half in length and half a mile in breadth. Four hundred and thirty-six acres were laid bare within the walls, and sixty-three acres without; of twenty-six wards the fire utterly destroyed fifteen, and left eight others damaged and half burnt; eighty-nine churches were burnt, four City gates, the Guildhall, many public buildings, 13,200 houses, and 400 streets.

1676.—In little less than ten years after the Great Fire, namely, in May, 1676, a fire broke out in Southwark, which did for that locality almost what the greater calamity had done for London. It broke out at an oilman's, between the George and Tabard Inns. The front of the Tabard was burnt down, but was immediately rebuilt, probably in facsimile of the original. The White Hart was also entirely consumed. The Town Hall and about 600 houses were entirely destroyed on this occasion. The houses being

yet, like those of old London, built chiefly of timber, lath, and plaster, the fire rapidly took hold of them, and though at this fire the engines were first worked with hose-pipes, the conflagration could not be arrested till it had reached the more solid walls of St. Thomas's Hospital. To prevent for the future a similar calamity, Commissioners were appointed by Act of Parliament for rebuilding the houses regularly and substantially with brick, which was done up to St. Margaret's Hill, where the fire had commenced. The flexible hose referred to above was invented in 1672 by Vanderheide. The Common Council in 1667 divided the City into four quarters; each quarter was ordered to be provided with 800 leathern buckets, fifty ladders, and two hand-squirts of brass for each parish, and each ward had to provide a bellman to walk through its precincts from ten at night till five in the morning, to give the alarm in case of fire.

1691.—On April 10, at Whitehall Palace, all the buildings over the stone gallery to the water-side were burnt, together with 150 houses of the nobility, and twenty were blown up.

1708.—Many destructive fires having occurred within the last few years preceding this date, chiefly through the carelessness of servants, an Act of Parliament was passed in this year by which it was enacted that every servant by whose negligence or carelessness a fire should be occasioned should forfeit £100, or, in default, be imprisoned and kept to hard labour during eighteen months. Is this Act still in force? If so, why is it not acted on?

1714.—On January 13 more than 100 houses were

burnt down in Thames Street, and more than fifty lives were lost.

1719.—On January 7 a fire broke out in the house of Mr. Astel, a merchant in Austin Friars, and several houses were burnt down. Astel's wife and daughter, an infant and the nurse, perished in the flames. On March 15 the stables of Parsons' brewhouse, near Hermitage Stairs, Wapping, were accidentally set on fire by a passing link. The stables, brewhouse, and several storehouses full of beer were destroyed. Then the fire caught a neighbouring hemp warehouse, and, speedily spreading, burned down eighteen warehouses and granaries on one side of the street, and then crossing, eight other warehouses were destroyed, and many others greatly damaged.

1725.—On September 8 a fire, which began at a brushmaker's near St. Olave's Church, Tooley Street, burnt down about sixty houses on both sides of the way, to the Bridge Gate, which being of stone, stopped the further progress of the flames. But the gate was so damaged that it was found necessary afterwards to rebuild it.

1731.—In July a large number of vessels were burnt on the Thames, through the upsetting of a pot of boiling pitch.

1733.—Various fires. One, not important, is mentioned here on account of the curious circumstances attending it. A fire being discovered on March 11 by the neighbours in the house of Mr. Cantillon, a French wine-merchant in Albemarle Street, they broke in, and found him dead in his bed, with his head almost burnt off. He having goods to the value of £200,000 in the



house, a suspicion of villainy arose. The servants were secured and committed to prison, but nothing being proved against them, they were acquitted ; a cook, however, who had been discharged about three weeks before, and who was known to have fled abroad with much valuable property in his possession, was suspected of having had a hand in the murder. On June 20 the Cross Keys Inn in Gracechurch Street, and several warehouses full of goods, were burnt and destroyed. A man and woman and five horses lost their lives in the flames, caused by a candle carelessly left in a stable.

1734.—On January 8 a fire broke out at the Queen's Head punch-house at St. Catherine's, near the Tower, and in a few hours forty houses were destroyed. On June 9 a fire which began at a brandy-shop in Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, and was supposed to be wilfully done by a woman-lodger, enraged at her landlord having given her notice because she had been heard to say she would have a bonfire on June 10, burnt down that house and thirteen more.

1737.—The King's Printing House in Blackfriars, 'the finest building of the kind in the whole world,' as one chronicler says, was burnt down on January 14 by a fire which accidentally broke out in the kitchen of Mr. Basket, the proprietor, and spread with such rapidity that the family in the dwelling-house escaped with the utmost difficulty, Mr. Basket himself being obliged to fly into the street in his shirt. His loss in printing types and material, stock in trade, etc., was computed at £20,000. On the 25th of the same month a fire broke out at Duke's Place, near Aldgate, which destroyed upwards of twenty houses.

1745.—On May 17 a fire, which began at a sail-maker's near St. George's Stairs, in Shad Thames, and was occasioned by a kettle of tar left carelessly to boil over, consumed not only the workshop, but, being close to the river's side, set fire to the *Berwick*, a ship of 300 tons, which burned to the water's edge, and consumed several lighters; and on shore the flames raged so furiously that thirty houses were burnt down.

1748.—On the morning of March 25, about one o'clock, a most destructive fire commenced at a peruke-maker's named Eldridge, in Exchange Alley, Cornhill, or, as others thought at the time, in a green stall close by in Exchange Alley; it was supposed that it happened through the servant leaving a candle burning in the shed whilst she was listening to a band performing at the Swan Tavern. Whatever the cause, the fire spread with such rapidity that before twelve at noon 118 houses were consumed, including the London Assurance Company's offices, the Fleece and the Three Tuns taverns, Tom's and the Rainbow coffee-houses, the Swan Tavern, Garraway's, Jonathan's, and the Jerusalem coffee-houses. Eldridge, with his wife, sister, children, and servants, perished in the flames; a Mr. Cook, a merchant, who lodged in the house, broke his leg in leaping from a window, and died soon after.

1749.—On August 12 a terrible fire broke out near Battlebridge Stairs, Tooley Street. It began about ten o'clock at night in a dye-house, and catching a hayloft close by, the flames instantly reached some old wooden houses, which burned so fiercely that their being saved

was out of the question, and they moreover set fire to a large brew-house, four wharves, a cooperage, and about eighty other houses, which, with their goods and furniture, were entirely destroyed. Some of the coasting vessels had their rigging burnt, and upwards of 2,000 quarters of malt and 800 butts of beer were lost on the occasion.

1752.—On June 27, about one o'clock in the morning, a fire broke out at 10 Lincoln's Inn New Square, and for want of water the house in question, and No. 11, next door to it, were quickly destroyed, the inmates having to make their escape in their night-clothes. At No. 10 neither papers, nor books, nor plate, nor documents, nor furniture, nor apparel were saved. At No. 11 they were more fortunate in saving most things of consequence. One unexpected piece of good luck befell a Mr. Pickering, who lost £10,000 in banknotes in No. 10, and was fortunate enough, when the rubbish was sifted, to recover most of them. A considerable quantity of cash and plate was also recovered; but title-deeds to vast estates were for ever lost.

1756.—On February 19 a fire broke out in the counting-house of Mr. Howell, a timber-merchant at Blackfriars, whose timber-yard was on the site of the various educational buildings now fronting the Embankment. The fire destroyed Howell's and an adjoining timber-yard, a glass warehouse, and about thirteen other houses. Some lighters, loaded with deals, also took fire, and their moorings being burnt, they fell down with the tide through London Bridge, and greatly endangered it for a time. Four ships were set on fire by them, three being entirely destroyed.

1758.—On April 11 the temporary wooden bridge erected for traffic during the rebuilding of London Bridge was wilfully set on fire by some miscreants who were never discovered, though a reward of £200 was offered for their detection. The bridge was entirely destroyed, but as by this calamity all intercourse with the Surrey side, except by boats, was cut off, a new temporary bridge was at once begun, and finished within less than one month. An Act was passed making any wilful attempt to destroy the bridge or its works to be death without benefit of clergy. The fact that this ‘benefit’ still prevailed shows how benighted the people of this country were as late as the middle of last century.

1759.—On November 10, about five o’clock in the morning, a fire broke out in Hamlin’s coffee-house, in Sweeting’s Alley, close to the Royal Exchange, which, spreading into Cornhill, destroyed thirteen large-sized houses. On December 23 a fire occurred at four in the morning in King Street, Covent Garden. It began at a cabinet-maker’s, and made its way into Rose Street and towards Long Acre, in which space it destroyed upwards of thirty houses. Many persons were burnt, and others buried in the ruins.

1760.—On April 18, as Earl Ferrers was taken from the Tower through Thames Street, a servant, entrusted with the care of some combustible matter in an oil-shop near St. Magnus’s Church, left his charge on the fire to gratify his curiosity with the sight of the noble prisoner. But before he could get back the whole shop was in flames, which, spreading into the neighbourhood, consumed seven dwelling-houses and a number of ware-

houses in Thames Street, full of valuable goods, and seriously damaged St. Magnus's Church.

1761.—On February 26 a fire arose from a curious circumstance. The wind was so high that it drove the windmill belonging to His Majesty at the Red House, Deptford, with such velocity that it could not be stopped, and took fire, and was entirely consumed, besides a large quantity of flour.

1762.—On January 7 a terrible fire broke out in a granary at St. Saviour's Dock, which in a short time destroyed the dock buildings and eighteen houses. On September 8, about two in the morning, a fire broke out at the back of a staircase in the press-yard, Newgate, which in a few hours consumed all the apartments in that place, and greatly damaged the chapel and houses adjoining the prison. Two unfortunate prisoners who were in the rooms which were burnt perished in the flames.

1763.—This year was a particularly unfortunate one for London with regard to fires. On January 6 a fire was discovered in the burial vaults of St. James's Church, Westminster, which made great havoc among the coffins and corpses. On the 11th there was a fire in Fleet Street, and on the 15th a large glass warehouse and the factory were burnt down. Thirty-two fires happened between Christmas, 1762, and the end of January in 1763. On May 6 Lady Molesworth's house in Upper Brook Street, Grosvenor Square, was consumed with all its contents in a very short time. Her ladyship, her brother, her second and third daughters, and four or five servants, perished in the flames. On July 10, about one in the morning, a fire broke out in a stable at a

place called New Crane, in Shadwell. Fire was set to a ship in the shipyard, and the flames spread to both sides of the street called Wapping Wall, and destroyed eighty-seven houses. On September 8 another fire occurred at Shadwell, near the dock; a large brew-house and thirty-six other houses were entirely consumed.

1764.—On November 24, about ten o'clock at night, a fire broke out in a workshop belonging to a snuff-maker at the back of Aldersgate Street, facing Little Britain, and consumed that house, the Cooks' Hall, which had escaped the Great Fire, and the house and yard of a timber-merchant.

1765.—This again was a year notorious for fires. On May 15 a fire broke out near Crowder's Rents, in Narrow Street, Limehouse, which destroyed upwards of sixty houses. On June 1 a fire occurred between six and seven in the evening in a mast-yard near Rotherhithe Church, and burned two hundred and six houses. It was said to have been occasioned by a pitch-kettle boiling over, which set the masts and timber in the yard all in flames. On August 25, about four o'clock in the morning, another fire broke out in a plumber's shop in Narrow Street, which consumed eleven houses, with such rapidity that the inmates had scarcely time to save anything. On August 28 several houses were burnt down in Theobald's Court, in the Strand, and on September 10 a number of houses adjoining Saddler's Hall in Cheapside were consumed; the hall itself was seriously damaged. But the most terrible fire in this year was that which broke out at a peruke-maker's in Bishopsgate Street, adjoining the corner



of Leadenhall Street, on the morning of November 7; it destroyed nearly one hundred houses. The flames quickly spread to the corner house, and thence to the opposite side, and set fire to a milliner's, and thence to the four corner houses. All the houses from Cornhill to the church of St. Martin Outwich, in Bishopsgate Street, were burnt down, and the church and parsonage-house were greatly damaged, as well as the back part of Merchant Taylors' Hall; the White Lion Tavern—which had been purchased for £3,000 on the preceding evening—and all the houses in White Lion Court were burnt, together with five houses in Cornhill, and others in Leadenhall Street. Several lives were lost by the falling of chimneys and walls, and on the following day eight persons were killed by the sudden fall of a stack of chimneys. A gentleman who had ventured among the ruins pointed out a spot where some persons lay under the rubbish, and two men, three women, a child about six years old, two dogs, and a cat were taken out alive.

1766.—Ratcliff was three times visited by fires. The most serious happened early in the year, when a brewery and seven other houses were burnt down.

1785.—On May 7, about three in the morning, a terrible fire broke out in a warehouse in Potter's Fields, Tooley Street, which destroyed several turpentine, pitch, and tar warehouses nearly adjoining. The turpentine, pitch, and tar being melted, ran about in all directions, and being thrown by the engines with the water upon the fire, the flames, instead of being subdued, raged with ten times greater fury. The ruins caused by this conflagration covered several acres of ground; several hundreds of dwelling-houses, stores, and factories were

destroyed, together with their contents. Some fifteen thousand chests of tea were burnt.

1792.—The fire which happened on May 1 in St. Martin's Court, Ludgate, was not a great one, but we mention it because it led to the interesting discovery of the remains of a small barbican or watch-tower, part of the old City wall of 1276. A fragment is built up in a court; the rest was destroyed by the vandals of the day.

1793.—On December 2 the whole range of warehouses at Hawley's Wharf, near Hermitage Bridge, Wapping, was destroyed by fire, together with several adjoining houses, and three vessels with other small craft that were lying in the dock. Great quantities of sugar, rum, and hemp were destroyed; of the sugar nearly 1,400 casks were melted by the intense heat into one mass, and flowed through the streets in a bright stream of liquid fire.

1794.—On July 23, about three in the afternoon, a dreadful fire broke out at Cock Hill, Ratcliff, which in its progress consumed more houses than any one conflagration since the Great Fire. It was occasioned by the boiling over of a pitch-kettle at a large builder's, from whose warehouse it spread to a barge laden with saltpetre, and from that to the saltpetre warehouses belonging to the East India Company. The wind, blowing strongly from the south, directed the flames towards Ratcliff High Street, which, being narrow, took fire on both sides. Thence it extended towards Stepney, until, having reached an open space of ground, it stopped for want of material to consume. About ten o'clock at night its devastations

on the side of Limehouse were checked by the great exertions of the firemen and inhabitants. It was a very remarkable circumstance that the large dwelling-house of a Mr. Bere, standing almost in the centre of the conflagration, remained uninjured, not even a single pane of glass being cracked. Was the reason of this ever inquired into? Six hundred and thirty houses were destroyed by this fire, with other valuable property, the total loss being estimated at upwards of one million pounds sterling.

1799.—On July 13 a fire broke out within the King's Bench Prison, and for some hours raged with the utmost violence. The prisoners themselves made every effort to extinguish the flames, without attempting to escape. When the fire was at length subdued it was found that between ninety and a hundred of the lodging rooms had been entirely destroyed.

1800.—The same cause which, as we have seen, led to many fires, operated again on October 6, viz., the boiling over of a pitch-kettle, whereby upwards of sixty private houses and other buildings at Wapping were entirely consumed. Several persons were killed by the explosion of some barrels of gunpowder. The damage was estimated at upwards of £200,000.

Here we end our journey along the path of the fiery serpent, which has impressed its trail on twelve centuries of London's experiences and sufferings, and which yet the energy, indomitable pluck, and perseverance of its citizens have on every occasion speedily effaced by new and grander creations than the monster had destroyed. Upwards of sixty conflagrations, some of vast extent, one involving the destruction of the very

heart of London, within the time indicated, and still London stands, more beautiful than ever, the greatest city the world has ever seen, the emporium of the whole earth, daily adding grander and finer structures to those it already possesses. Even in our century the fiery dragon has repeatedly expanded over it its destructive wings; but, phoenix-like, this invincible city of London ever rises from its ashes—truly a boast, a marvel, and a show! Londoners and Englishmen have cause to be proud of their capital.

## XVII.

### ANGELS AND DEVILS IN PETTICOATS.

A LADY who occasionally has a peep at my manuscript recently said to me : ‘ You write on every subject, never mind how horrible it may be—plagues, executions, frowsy old monks, and ugly beasts, but not a word about what is of perennial interest to your male and your female readers too.’ ‘ And, pray, what is that?’ I replied. ‘ You stupid!’ she said, ‘ can’t you guess? Why, the women. You seem to exclude them from your book as the Lords determined to exclude the ladies from the galleries of the two Houses of Parliament; but the ladies got in, for all that. And do you think you are more powerful than the House of Lords?’ I admitted my inferiority in this respect, but reminded the lady that in previous publications I had devoted considerable space to the no doubt highly and everlastingly interesting subject she referred to—that famous blue stockings, actresses, and queens of society had received due homage from me. But the answer to this was decisive : ‘ No matter. You can never write too much about *us* ; men never get tired of reading about *us*. They pretend to crave for

intellectual converse with men of mind and genius, and when they get it, let a pretty woman step in, and they leave the musty old professor with his theories to bask in the sunshine of a witty, though frivolous, maiden's smiles and tittle-tattle. Men like to take a sly peep at the gynæceum; let them have it. Put some life into your dead streets and parks by introducing a few ladies of various types, if you only show as much of them as the ferrules of their parasols just turning the corners. You have not the privilege of the Misses Berry, who, when at their receptions in Curzon Street they found their rooms overcrowded with ladies, called out to the old servant Murrell, "No more petticoats!" whereupon he would put out the lamp over the door to stop more carriage-loads of that garment coming in. *You* must admit them.' I protested that there were some queer characters among them, which might shock female readers. 'Readers are never shocked,' answered my inexorable tormentor; 'personal contact in flesh and blood, of course, is objectionable to modern fastidiousness; but you may say anything you like in books and plays—the more wicked it is, the more it is secretly relished.'

Thus admonished and justified, I stroll through the harem of vanished beauties, and come upon the shade of—Hannah More! How does she get into such company? By being the friend and correspondent of that leering cynic Horace Walpole, who on this occasion was not 'leary' enough to avoid being drawn into the net of prim and sly Hannah, to assist her in bolstering up the fame of her protégée, the milkwoman who wrote poetry. But if her milk was no better than her poetry,



her customers were much to be pitied. But Hannah More does not enliven the street much. Oh, who is this bare-footed and bare-legged girl in an Irish village? Her name is O'Neill, who, as a child, acted in her father's 'sharing' company, for which he fitted up barns as theatres, and shared the proceeds of the play with the actors. The results were but poor; but his little daughter was clever, and ere she was twenty-three she appeared as Juliet at Covent Garden, with a salary of £15, £16, and £18 a week, and ended by marrying a gentleman of fortune, a Mr. Becher.

What collects this howling, coarsely-jesting, blaspheming crowd on Ludgate Hill? Behold, a priestly procession comes along, and in its midst walks a woman in her shift, her feet and head bare, carrying a taper in her hand. It is Jane Shore, doing penance for having loved Edward IV., the handsomest man of his time. In his Court, in which she lived about twelve years, she delighted all by her beauty, pleasant manners, and wit, for she could read and write well, which few of the courtiers then could. Look at her now on Ludgate Hill, exposed to the jeers and gibes of the rabble! Had justice any part in the distribution of the rewards of virtue and vice, half the ladies of the aristocracy should have walked with her in the procession. And this once fêted idol of society, beloved by a King, died in the utmost penury at the age of upwards of eighty, and has been through succeeding ages held up by illogical moralists, obsequious historians, and copyists in general as a scarecrow to warn off illicit love, whilst thousands thrive on it, and die in the odour of sanctity. But a servile Church, at the bidding of a tyrant, was pleased

to make an example of her. Her name conjures up that of Lady Sarah Lennox (b. 1745), who, in private theatricals at Holland House, played by children and very young ladies, took the part of the heroine in the piece 'Jane Shore.' George III. fell in love with Lady Sarah, and would have married her (she was his cousin); but an accident, in which she broke her leg, and so was laid up for a time, gave her enemies time to work. They represented to the King that Lady Sarah still continued her intercourse with Lord Newbottle, to whom she had been engaged before the King's offer of marriage, and the result was that she lost the chance of wearing the crown. Before the King married the Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Lady Sarah, says Walpole, would sometimes appear as a haymaker in the park of Holland House in order to attract the attention of the King; but her stratagem was without success. However, she got over her disappointment, and became the mother of the gallant Napiers. She died at the age of eighty-two. Her sister, Lady Georgiana Caroline Lennox, eloped with Henry Fox, to whom she was married in the Fleet Prison in 1744.

Here come two ladies, arm in arm—no, with their arms round each other's waists, for that is the orthodox fashion with ladies who are friends. And these two are friends, for they are fellow-victims. The one is Hannah Lightfoot, the fair Quakeress, and the other is Mrs. Fitzherbert. The first is said to have been privately married to George III. before his accession, and the second to George IV. when he also was still Prince of Wales. As these ladies have played no unimportant part in the 'Mysteries of London,' and

opinions concerning them are not yet settled, the controversies raging around them are worth examination.

Having read, I think, all that has been written about Hannah Lightfoot, I differ from some weighty authorities, who look upon her as a total myth. That she did exist is proved, were no other proof extant, by the fact that on March 3, 1756, the Society of Friends, to which she belonged, after repeated endeavours to discover the place of her abode, and to intimate to her their intention of disowning her on her not replying to the summons to justify herself, did on the above date pronounce her disownment for her misconduct, which consisted in her eloping from the house of her uncle in Market Street, now the arcade running west of the Italian Opera House (which has given place to the Carlton Hotel), with some person not named, but popularly believed to have been Prince George, to whom she was said to have been privately married by Parson Keith at Curzon Street Chapel. This marriage we strongly doubt; but the Royal Family, seeing the Prince's infatuation, and fearing it might lead to such a *mésalliance*, procured Hannah's marriage to Isaac Axford, a grocer's assistant to Barton, of Ludgate Hill; the marriage having taken place, Hannah stayed a few days with her husband, when, during his absence from home, she was taken off in a carriage, and Isaac never saw her again. The report is that a Mr. Perryn, of Knightsbridge, which is close to the royal palace, and therefore convenient to her royal lover, received her into his house, which stood some way retired from the main-road, and that she lived and died there. But, as intimated, this was a rumour only; yet, certain

it is that she was never heard of again after her flight from her husband's house, though the Marquis of Bath, who died in 1796, a short time before his death, reported that she was then living. Axford, some years after her disappearance, believing her dead, married again a Miss Bartlett, of Keevil, with whom he lived at Warminster, carrying on a grocer's business. Through his second wife he succeeded to an estate at Chevrell, of about £150 a year. On the report of his first wife being still alive, a Mr. Bartlett, a first-cousin to Isaac's second wife, claimed the estate on a plea of the invalidity of the second marriage. How this suit was decided I have not been able to discover. Probably it was suppressed by an 'august influence,' as there might have been too much 'dirty linen' to wash. Axford died about the year 1816, at the age of eighty-six. These are the leading facts and surmises on this mysterious transaction. No other Quakeress ever gave the insect-eyed critics and fashionable scandal-mongers so much thread to unwind as did Hannah Lightfoot.

Mrs. Fitzherbert *was* married to a royal prince, afterwards George IV. Now, had George III. really married the fair Quakeress, the marriage would have been valid, and she would have become Queen of England; but in 1772 the Royal Marriage Act had been passed in order to place restrictions on the marriages of the descendants of George III., and therefore the marriage between the Prince of Wales and Mrs. Fitzherbert, which took place on December 21, 1786, at Carlton House, by a clergyman of the Established Church, was a pure farce, since without the sanction of Parliament it was not legal. Mrs. Fitzherbert was the

daughter of Walter Smythe, Esq., of Brambridge, Hants, and was first married to Edward Weld, Esq., of Lulworth Castle, Dorsetshire\*; secondly to Thomas Fitzherbert, Esq., of Swinnerton, Staffordshire. She became a second time a widow, and was greatly admired in society on account of her beauty and accomplishments. In 1785, being then twenty-nine years of age, she became acquainted with the Prince of Wales, her junior by six years, who fell in love with her, and offered to marry her. But she, knowing the provisions of the Royal Marriage Act, declined the honour, and even went abroad to escape the Prince's unremitting attentions. A rumour of all this got amongst the public, and there was much murmuring against such a marriage, especially as the lady was a Roman Catholic. Mr. Fox warned the Prince against committing so indiscreet and illegal an act, and he replied that there never had been any grounds for such a report; yet ten days after he married Mrs. Fitzherbert, who at last yielded to the Prince's ardour, whilst Mr. Fox, misled by the Prince, on the next discussion of the subject in the House of Commons contradicted the report of the marriage *in toto*, denouncing it as a malicious falsehood. And this was the conduct of the 'first gentleman in Europe'! Mrs. Fitzherbert lived for several years openly with the Prince as his wife. A separation took place in 1795, when the Prince was about to marry (for the payment

\* The Welds had a large estate and fine mansion west of Lincoln's Inn Fields—the Wild Streets now existing there derive their name in a corrupted manner from the Weld family. The Welds also presented Stonyhurst to the Jesuits. See my 'History of Lincoln's Inn Fields.'

of his debts, which amounted to about £1,000,000) the unfortunate Caroline of Brunswick. Mrs. Fitzherbert survived this event forty-two years, retaining the Prince's friendship and something more all the time. She died at Brighton in 1837.

Another victim of a sham marriage passes before us. At the Duke's Theatre in Portugal Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, there appeared in a play, called the 'Siege of Rhodes,' one of the earliest of female performers, who is only known by her theatrical name—Roxalana, the heroine of the above play. She had many admirers, but listened to none of them, till Aubrey de Vere, the last Earl of Oxford, presented her with a promise of marriage in due form, and actually on the following day came to her lodgings, attended by a sham parson and another man for a witness. The marriage was solemnized with all proper ceremonies in the presence of one of her fellow-players, who attended as a witness on her part. But the deception was soon discovered; it appeared that the pretended priest was one of my Lord's trumpeters, and the witness his kettle-drummer. The parson and his accomplice never appeared after the ceremony. The woman so shamefully deceived appealed to the law, but in vain; she threw herself at the King's feet to demand justice, but it was denied her, and she could consider herself lucky when she was allotted an annuity of £300, with the condition that she should reassume her former name of Roxalana.

Few ladies who shone in society and on the stage, for a time, had such varied experiences as Mrs. Anne Bellamy. She was born in 1727; her grandmother was the daughter of a Kentish farmer, who, impoverished by her husband,



was glad to accept the offer of Mrs. Godfrey, sister to the Duke of Marlborough, to take her daughter under her protection, and by her she was placed at a boarding-school with her own daughter. Here Anne attracted the attention of Lord Tyrawley, with whom she eloped. But her lover soon forsook her, whereupon she went on the stage in Ireland, where she continued for several years, but at last took it into her head to follow Lord Tyrawley to Lisbon. She was received by him with open arms, but he having, prior to her arrival, formed a connection with a lady of that country, and not caring to let Anne, whose maiden name was Leal, know this, he placed her in the family of an English merchant. In this family she became acquainted with Captain Bellamy, who, anxious to marry her, informed her of Lord Tyrawley's connection. Enraged at this, Miss Leal at once married Captain Bellamy, and sailed with him for Ireland. There Anne Bellamy, our heroine, made her appearance, a few months too soon to claim kinship with Captain Bellamy—which event so disgusted him that he left his wife and never afterwards corresponded with her. But Lord Tyrawley acknowledged the child as his, took charge of her, and on his return to England took her to a little box he had hired in Bushey Park. There he introduced her to his friends, men gay and witty, and she soon became the object of admiration. On her father being appointed Ambassador to Russia, Lord Tyrawley left her in charge of a lady, with strict injunctions that the young lady was never to see her mother. He made her an allowance of £100 a year. Her mother, having ascertained this, induced her to leave her protectress and live with her. Lord Tyrawley immediately

stopped the allowance, and totally renounced his daughter. Rich, of Covent Garden, having accidentally heard her repeat some passages from 'Othello,' engaged her as a performer at that theatre. She appeared in the character of Monimia, and though at first stage-struck, and unable to proceed in her part, she recovered herself, and finished with the greatest éclat, so that even Quin, who had predicted her failure, was so fascinated, that when she came off he caught her in his arms and exclaimed: 'Thou art a divine creature, and the true spirit is in thee!' In this public position she had many admirers, and was actually carried off by Lord Byron, whom she had rejected, but was rescued by a friend. Her mother, believing her to have been a consenting party to the carrying off, repudiated her. This threw her into a violent fever, which nearly proved fatal. On her recovery, after a short visit to Ireland, she returned to Covent Garden, and took the character of Froth in the 'Double Dealer.' One evening after the play Quin introduced her to Lord Tyrawley in the scene-room, and a perfect reconciliation between them took place. A Mr. Crump wished to marry her, and her mother and Lord Tyrawley were in favour of the match, but she gave the preference to Mr. Metham, who had long been an admirer of hers, and allowed him to carry her off from behind the scenes at the beginning of the fifth act of the 'Provoked Wife,' in which she played Lady Fanciful, leaving Mr. Quin to apologize to the audience—which was about as vile conduct towards a gentleman who had always befriended her as she could be guilty of. Our shady heroine retired with Mr. Metham to York, where she remained till she was delivered of a

son. In consequence of an offer, she, at her lover's persuasion, and much against her wish, returned to town, where, in September, 1750, she was received by the public with as much enthusiasm as ever. The connection between her and Mr. Metham continued till, she having roused his jealousy, a quarrel and a separation ensued. A Mr. Calcraft then made proposals to her, and she agreed to live with him; but this gentleman's parsimony, as she called his objection to her extravagance, created great coolness between them, and finally led to a separation. She then lived with Mr. Digges in Ireland, but he being in poor circumstances, they parted at the end of two years. She returned to England in 1767, where she again secured good engagements; but 'through her unbounded generosity,' as she would have us believe from her autobiography, she was always in pecuniary difficulties, and had at one time to take up her residence in St. George's Fields, within the rules of the King's Bench. Such is the hankering of some men after soiled doves—or, in less poetic language, damaged goods—that, on her regaining her liberty, a Mr. Woodward took her under his protection, and she lived with him till his death in 1777; by his will he left the bulk of his property in trust to his executors to purchase an annuity for her during her life. But through the chicanery of an attorney, or some other cause not clearly made out, she derived little or no benefit from this bequest, and was at last, by an accumulation of misery, on the point of putting an end to it by suicide, when she was discovered by some friends, who liberally supplied her wants. Henceforth the world, whose idol she had been, forget her.

Now, it strikes us that the above short biography is an epitome of the lives of most of the famous women of the last century who were not by rank and fortune raised above the painful and degrading contingencies of the life of the adventuress. And in such a life what do we see but the individual struggle for liberty, the means to throw off the trammels inexorable society imposes on its members, a struggle which in former centuries was admitted to be fair, since it provoked so little condemnation from the public—a struggle for the emancipation of woman, which never was so fierce as it is now, when women compete in all directions with men, adopting their clothes, habits, and practices? And the lives of such famous or infamous ladies show us that, however passionate may have been the cult of beauty among the ancient Greeks, it was no less so in preceding centuries and at the present day; or whence the successes of those ladies, past and present? Human nature always remains the same.

When the lady who had set my pen in motion read the above, she said: ‘You paint us women rather dark.’ ‘Dark,’ I replied, ‘but comely. The society woman is a product, is the reflex of society. The Countess of Shrewsbury and the Duchess of Cleveland were as much the outcome of the circle in which they lived as was Mrs. Siddons or Mrs. Montagu of hers. Women are, after all, the softer sex, the wax on which man impresses the stamp he wishes her to bear. If men are pleased to see women smoke, of course, smoke they will. And so in all other matters.’

## XVIII.

### THE SOUTH LAMBETH ROAD :

#### A MICROSCOPIC BIT OF TOPOGRAPHY.

THE South Lambeth Road commences at Vauxhall Cross. Vauxhall ! What a host of recollections it calls up ! Guy Fawkes, of course, is the first name that suggests itself to the examiner of the spot, though that redoubtable conspirator had no more to do with Vauxhall than with the Druidic temple on Salisbury Plain. Then we have Vauxhall in military array, with ‘a quadrant fort with four half bulwarks,’ and finally the gardens—*the* gardens, which, alas ! have vanished, leaving not a vestige behind. It is not within our scope to describe them—and, indeed, have they not been amply described in ponderous county and parish histories, in magazine articles and pamphlets without number ? But the gardens are gone, and dull mean streets of small houses now occupy the site. The open space called Vauxhall Cross, because six streets converge there, is one of the ugliest spots in London. The Seven Dials has at least historic squalor to impart some interest to it in the eyes of the London antiquary, but Vauxhall Cross has not one redeeming feature to save it from

utter contempt. The lovely nursery grounds, famous for camellias, magnoliæ, conspicuæ, and grapes, even to the middle of this century, are now occupied by a railway-station and cab-yard and a stone-mason's works. At three of the street-corners stand as many public-houses of the ordinary type, one of them being surmounted by an elaborate sign, so hideous as to be an architectural nightmare. The Cross is a favourite prowling-place of those outcasts of society, the low bookmakers, who lie in wait there for errand-boys and shopmen, inciting them to bet on horses their hard-earned wages, or, perchance, money taken from their masters' tills. Opposite the railway-station, recently rebuilt and turned from a barn into a commodious building, the high dead wall of the gasworks stares you in the face; houses and shops generally are mean, and without a feature of interest; the roadway is cut up by tramrails, and four of the roads are rendered dangerous and often impassable for foot-passengers by the lumbering modern juggernauts called tramcars.

Let us hasten away from the spot, and enter the South Lambeth Road. But before we can do this, we have to pass through the *via mala* of the railway bridge, which spans the road at its northern end, and is virtually a gloomy tunnel, though less so since its reconstruction a few years ago from a dark, heavy, narrow stone bridge into a wide and somewhat lighter iron structure. But this alteration has rendered the thundering noise made by the trains passing over its iron floor more terrible and of longer duration, since the bridge has been greatly widened. Passing under that bridge in a hansom cab is a trial for nervous people, for horses startled by a train suddenly coming on the bridge are apt to bolt.



No doubt some of my readers have antiquarian tastes. For their gratification I will here mention that the northern part of the South Lambeth Road is situate in the old manor of Faukeshall (Vauxhall), and the southern in that of Stockwell, which was anciently called South Lambeth. In 1338 Elizabeth de Burgh, the then Lady of the Manor of Faukeshall, by exchange of lands in Suffolk, transferred that manor, as well as that of Kennington, to Edward III., who granted it to his son, Edward the Black Prince, who, in 1354, granted it to the monks of Canterbury, which grant was confirmed by the King, and further confirmed in 1361. On the suppression of the monasteries Henry VIII. gave the manor to the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury, to whom it still belongs.

There is a curious steward's account in the Public Record Office of the receipts and outgoings of this manor from October 6 to November 8, 1327, rendered by Alan Martyn, reeve of Faukeshall, to Lady Elizabeth de Burgh, from which we take the following items :

‘The same Alan answers for 54<sup>s</sup> 3½<sup>d</sup> received for rents ; expenses were, to Henry Husbonde, for the debt of the lady 43<sup>s</sup> 4<sup>d</sup> ; for deliverance of a boat attached at Queenhithe 2<sup>s</sup> 2<sup>d</sup> ; for wharfage 1<sup>d</sup> ; clouts and cart-nails 3<sup>d</sup>. In expenses of two men, with three horses and a cart fetching three quarters of wheat at Hounslow, 2½<sup>d</sup> ; horseshoes 8<sup>d</sup> ; John Bullock going to Farnham with a sack to fetch corn, 3<sup>d</sup> ; 6 pounds of iron bought for the plough, 4<sup>d</sup> ; manufacturing the same iron 4<sup>d</sup> ; nails bought for the cart, 1<sup>d</sup> ; a bushel of wheat bought for seed, 6½<sup>d</sup>. The sum [some of the items are here omitted] 49<sup>s</sup> 7<sup>d</sup>. Seed on twenty-six

acres of land in Clayfield, eight quarters and one bushel.' In an old map in the writer's possession, this Clayfield, comprising 29 acres, is shown to have been to the south-east of Caroon Park. The reeve continues in his account : 'Paid for winnowing 3<sup>d</sup>; to Dawe le Drivere, for his stipend at St. Michael 2<sup>s</sup> 6<sup>d</sup>; also to William le Mann, Carter, 18<sup>d</sup>; to John Gardiner for his wages 2<sup>s</sup>, Sum 6<sup>s</sup>. Sum total 55<sup>s</sup> 7<sup>d</sup>, and so the lady is bound to the said Martyn in 15½<sup>d</sup>.'

In Domesday Book the manor of Stockwell is said to have belonged to the monks of Waltham, but they seem to have lost it when it was called Stockwell or South Lambeth. Robert de Aguilon afterwards held the manor; by descent it passed to William de Fortibus, Earl of Albemarle; eventually it came to the Earl of Lancaster, to Thomas Romaine, a citizen of London, and on the death of the latter's widow, in 1326, the manor, described as a tenement in Stockwell, a capital messuage, two gardens, one dove-house, 287 acres of land, 19¼ of meadow, etc., went to her daughters. The manor afterwards belonged to John Harold, burgess of Calais, and subsequently to John Wynter, who founded a chantry in Lambeth Church, and in 1449 parted with the manor to Nicholas Molyneux, Esq., who sold it to Ralph Leigh, whose descendant in 1547 conveyed Stockwell to Henry VIII. Queen Mary granted it to Anthony Brown, first Viscount Montagu. In the reign of William III. it belonged to the family of Thornicroft, who sold it to William Lambert, who was an oilman on Ludgate Hill, who died in 1810, and left it to his nephew, James Lambert, of Fowlers-Hawkhurst, Kent, Esq. Whilst Viscount Montagu

was in possession he had granted a lease of the Stockwell Manor House for one thousand years to Thomas Colwall, Esq., from whom Isaac Barrett, a wax-chandler, purchased it. Eventually, by marriage, the estate passed to William Brown, Esq., who took the name of Angell, but the will by which he obtained the estate was of so extraordinary a character that it became the subject of long and costly litigation. Ejectments were brought, and five or six suits in Chancery and the Exchequer, greatly enriching the lawyers, who must, thanks to the many changes in proprietorship, for centuries have looked upon the Stockwell estate, as well as the manor, as a constantly-flowing and abundant source of liberal fees.

We will now return to the South Lambeth Road. Passing on and emerging from the shade under the bridge, we are relieved by a fine prospect. For as the road a little farther on makes a bend to the right,\* we have spread out before us nearly the whole length of the new Vauxhall Park, opened in 1890. The site was formerly known as the Lawn, with its eight houses, and Caroon House, with the grounds belonging to it.

Before reaching the Park, we pass on the left-hand side a wide street, called the Grove. Originally, and till early in this century, it led only to the market gardens and nurseries, which then rendered this locality so pleasant. In the twenties a house was built in the nursery grounds and called the Retreat, which name it also imparted to the road. Afterwards houses were built along the road, and it assumed the name of the

\* The reader is advised to follow the route on a good local map.

Grove; the merciless builder actually added insult to injury, for after cutting down most of the trees which lined the road and stood in the adjoining gardens, he, in pure satire, called the so denuded ground a 'Grove.' But worse was to come: about twenty years ago the whole of the nursery and market gardens extending from the so-called Grove to Harleyford Road were grubbed up, and from an open space turned into a small labyrinth of dreary half-villa, half-cottage-like tenements, to which the sarcastic jerry-vandal derisively extended the name of the 'Grove,' which it still retains—as if there were not already enough of such delusive street-names scattered all over London. It is illegal to affix deceptive labels to goods sold to the public: it ought to be so to give misleading names to streets.

A curious accident happened in the Grove in April, 1878. A movable crane put up in the stone yard originally known as the Grapery, between the railway-station and the Grove, and occupied by the afterwards notorious Hobbs, by some means struck the back of one of the houses in the Grove, causing a large fall of brickwork and plaster. In an upper room a lady, the widow of an R.A., who was in bed in the house partially destroyed, was marvellously preserved. The room in which she was lying was filled with the *débris*, and nearly every article in it broken to pieces. Fortunately for the occupant, the first thing to fall on the bed was a large framed painting, which, in its turn, was immediately covered with broken bricks, mortar, laths, and plaster. Upon being rescued, the lady was found, although greatly alarmed, quite uninjured.

The row of old houses we now pass on the left was formerly called Vauxhall Place. Then comes Langley Lane, the name of which originally was Hales Place, when it led to some nice gardens, which in the latter part of this century were covered by Bonnington Square. The entrance to the lane was at first very narrow, but early in 1898 it was considerably widened, and a hideous building of flats—called Park Mansions, because its southern side faces Vauxhall Park—erected at the corner. Before its erection there stood on the spot a picturesque cottage, all overgrown with ivy; it was of the smallest dimensions, scarce large enough to swing the proverbial cat in it. Next to it was an old-fashioned country house, now swept away. Passing Park Mansions, we come to Lawn Lane. This, now a public road leading down to the Crown Works, or the workshops and yards of Messrs. Hill and Higgs, the builders and contractors, was originally merely a country lane to the market gardens at the end of it. It was shaded on the left-hand side by a row of twenty-two noble trees, which were ruthlessly cut down in 1893. But the lane in former days was otherwise attractive: it was bordered on its north side throughout its whole length by the river Effra. This river, which rose in the high grounds of Norwood, after passing through Dulwich and on to the Brixton Road, took a sharp turn to the west near St. Mark's Church, flowed through the fields, then known as Fentiman's, and whilst the main stream continued in a north-easterly direction towards Vauxhall, a branch of it turned in a northerly direction towards the South Lambeth Road, flowing through what was then a portion of Caroon Park, afterwards the Lawn

Estate, and now Vauxhall Park. The river, as mentioned above, ran along the Lane, and where it joined the South Lambeth Road turned almost at a right angle up that road towards Vauxhall. The present writer well remembers the little bridges which, as in the Brixton Road, gave access to the houses in the road. According to tradition, Queen Elizabeth would in her royal barge go up the Effra to visit Sir Noel Caroon, the then Dutch Ambassador, whom she greatly favoured. It has been doubted whether the Effra ever was a river of sufficient size to be thus navigable, but according to an old plan in the writer's possession, and statements made to him by a gardener employed for upwards of fifty years on the Lawn Estate, the Effra would often assume the dimensions of a river wide and deep enough to bear large barges. The Fleet River, now a mere sewer in an iron tube, once bore ships up to Holborn; why not the Effra, though, like the Fleet, it is now nothing but a sewer in an iron tube, into which it was converted early in the sixties?

The Lawn property mentioned above, which forms the greater part of the present Vauxhall Park, originally was a large estate extending from Vauxhall and Kennington Oval to the Dorset Road, which connects the South Lambeth Road with the Clapham Road. It was chiefly a deer park, and for twenty-eight years the residence of Sir Noel Caroon, who, during the reigns of Elizabeth and James I., was Dutch Ambassador in England. Sir Noel built a large mansion in the castellated style, consisting of a centre and two wings. A great part of the walls surrounding the park still existed in the earlier part of this century, particularly one portion extending across Kennington Oval.



Sir Noel Caroon was a great favourite with Queen Elizabeth, who often visited him at his Lambeth mansion, especially in the year 1599, when she dined there on July 27 on her way to Lord Burleigh at Wimbledon. Among the list of gifts in the same year is the following :

‘Mounser Caron. Item, given by her said Highness, and delivered the 15th October, anno pred., to Mounser Caron, agent for Flanders, at his [temporary] departure out of England, part of one chain of gold, bought of Hugh Kaylle, per oz. 35 oz. qr. of the goodness of 21 “Karretts di graine,” and part of one other chain, bought of the said Richard Martyn, per oz. 33 oz. qr. dwt. 6 grains, of the goodness of 22 “Karretts di graine”: in toto, 68 oz. di 3 dwts. 6 granes.

‘ELIZABETH.’

Sir Noel is said to have been a very worthy, charitable man. In 1617 he gave £100 towards repairing the church, and £50 to the poor of the parish. In 1623 he, by a charge on his South Lambeth property, built and endowed almshouses for seven poor women, parishioners of Lambeth, who must be sixty years old at the time of their election. These almshouses stood in the Wandsworth Road; over the door was a marble tablet with a Latin inscription of the usual dedicatory type. Sir Charles Blicke, of whom more afterwards, had the almshouses repaired, but in doing so the careless workmen broke the marble tablet so that it could not be replaced.

In the first half of this century the almshouses in the Wandsworth Road were pulled down, and new ones

erected in the Fentiman Road, on the original Caroon property. The original endowment amounted to £28 per annum; it was increased by subsequent donations. In 1773 the Countess Gower, in pursuance of the will of Earl Thanet, left to Sir Noel's almshouses £1,150 three per cent. consols, the dividend to be paid in equal shares to the inmates. The annual income from this source was £34 10s. In 1783 Hayes Fortee (died 1809, buried in Lambeth Church, where there is a marble tablet to his memory) left £746 5s. 4d. three per cent. consols, half of the dividend to go to the inmates of Sir Noel's almshouses.

Sir Noel Caroon died in 1623, and was buried in Lambeth Church on January 25, 1624. Over a tomb erected to John Mompesson might formerly be seen hung up the helmet, sword, gauntlet, and spurs of Sir Noel, but they long ago disappeared. After his death Caroon House and the lands belonging to it were granted to Lord Chancellor Clarendon by Charles II. in 1666, and afterwards to Sir Jeremy Whichcott. To this house the Fleet prisoners were removed after the Great Fire. Eventually the chief portion of this estate became the property of Sir Joseph Mawbey, Bart.—whose name is commemorated in Mawbey Street, in the South Lambeth Road—sometime Knight of the Shire of Surrey. He had married the daughter of Mr. Pratt, who carried on the distillery at Vauxhall now known as Burnett's, and owned the greater portion of the Caroon estate, which became Sir Joseph's property, as well as the distillery and other property of Mr. Pratt. Sir Joseph's father was a poor peasant at Ravenstone, in Leicestershire; but young Joseph had a rich uncle—

the above-mentioned Mr. Pratt—in London, to whom his parents sent him, and who treated him kindly, gave him his daughter, and at his death all his wealth. But Sir Joseph deserved it. He was not only a great distiller, but a man who in a venal age took the part of the oppressed, resisting all tyranny at home, and especially the unjust war by which England lost her grand possessions in America. The Pratts had long been a distinguished and influential family in Lambeth, in whose church various epitaphs recording the deeds of members of the family may still be read. On Sir Joseph Mawbey's death in 1798 the Caroon estate came back by purchase to a descendant of the Dutch ambassador, namely Sir Charles Blicke, who was descended from the Barons Blicke and Caroon in Holland. Sir Charles was a fashionable physician at the end of the last and the beginning of this century, a man of great wealth, whose freehold and leasehold estates in various parts of London fill with their titles only a schedule of a great many pages. Sir Charles was a liberal benefactor to the College of Surgeons in Lincoln's Inn Fields, as its records testify. He was surgeon to St. Bartholomew's Hospital. He had a son and a daughter, and on his death left the bulk of his property to his son Charles. His daughter had married Sir Loftus Otway, knight, an officer who greatly distinguished himself in the Peninsular War, and was in high favour with George IV., who stood godfather to Sir Loftus's daughter Georgina. On Mr. Charles Blicke's death in 1838 he, dying unmarried, left all his estates to his sister, the wife of Sir Loftus Otway. And thus the Lawn estate came into the Otway family, the last

private owners of it. But its original extent had already then been greatly reduced, for in 1810 Messrs. Beaufoy and Co., the distillers—whose works had till then been at Cuper's Gardens, the site of the northern end of the present Waterloo Road, and the houses bordering it—had, by the construction of the new bridge, first called Strand, and afterwards Waterloo, Bridge, and the laying out of the new road on the Surrey side, been obliged to leave the premises they occupied, and had settled at South Lambeth, acquiring for the purpose that portion of the Caroon estate which extended from the present Fentiman Road to the Dorset Road, north and south, and as far as the present Meadow Road to the east. Portions of the estate to the north of the Lawn had been separated from the Caroon estate long before then. Mr. Charles Blicke, the son of Sir Charles, built a house for his own occupation on the Lawn estate, and called it Caroon House, under which name it was known till it was pulled down in 1891. After the death of Mr. Charles Blicke in 1838, the house and grounds belonging to it were sold by Lady Otway to Mr. James L. Seager, from whom it passed to various other owners until its final demolition, when its site and the grounds surrounding it were incorporated with the new Vauxhall Park. After the sale of part of the Caroon estate in 1838 the purchaser sold some of the land, across which the parish constructed the present Fentiman Road—so called after Mr. Fentiman, who about a century ago had bought the estate known as Claylands, between the South Lambeth and the Clapham Roads, though from its real character it should have been called Marshland. Mr. Fentiman drained the

ground, enclosed several acres for pleasure-grounds, and built himself a handsome mansion, a fine engraving of which may be seen in Brayley's 'History of Surrey.' Fentiman died in 1820, his son in 1838, and the widow of the latter, who continued to occupy the mansion, died in 1841, when the house was pulled down, and the site of it and of its once beautiful gardens was covered with mean-looking streets.

Concerning the Lawn, we may add that up to the sixties the piece of turf in front of the houses was rendered picturesque by two fine ponds, originally one, famous at one time for their water-lilies and other aquatic plants. The water was derived from the Effra, then still a river; but as it was at that period turned into a sewer, the ponds had to be filled up. In the garden of the northern end house there was a bridge over a branch of the Effra, which was there admitted, by means of a sluice and its appliances, into the gardens at the back of all the houses, as shown on a plan attached to a lease granted by Geo. Lovibond to James Gubbins of four houses on the Lawn on August 18, 1791, for eighty-five years. At the eastern end of the gardens the river Effra formed the boundary, and at its north-eastern point turned at a right angle down Lawn Lane, bordered by noble trees, as already mentioned. On the south, close to Caroon House, there was in 1838, before the Fentiman Road was made, a large pond of irregular form, and more to the east a long pond, both of which were afterwards included in the grounds of Mr. Beaufoy, enclosed by a high wall along the Fentiman Road and part of the South Lambeth Road. The ponds were turned into fountains, but no vestige of them now

remains, the grounds having, about the year 1882, been covered with houses.

In 1886, as already mentioned, the Lawn and Caroon House (the modern one) were sold, and the purchaser at first intended to build on the site. But the question of preserving the two estates as a public park soon attracted a considerable amount of attention. Meetings were held, and public subscriptions invited; Mr. Mark Beaufoy, M.P., heading the list with £1,000. The Metropolitan Board, the Lambeth Vestry, and the Charity Commissioners promised the sum of £38,250 towards the purchase-money, which Mr. Cobeldick, the new owner, liberally reduced from £47,500 to £45,000. The Bill authorizing the purchase passed the House of Commons, and, the amount still required having been shortly after raised by subscription, the purchase was completed, and the laying out of the park by the Kyrle Society commenced. The park is surrounded by a handsome railing or fence; the house of the late Mr. Fawcett was for a time left standing, all the other seven houses having been pulled down, and served as a meeting-place of the Park Committee and gardener's residence. The Prince of Wales, who had taken a great interest in the carrying out of the scheme, opened the park, which ceremony took place on July 7, 1890. In August, 1892, a handsome fountain of Doulton ware, presented by Sir Henry Doulton, was unveiled in the park; and on June 7, 1893, a memorial statue of the late Professor Fawcett, also given by Sir Henry Doulton, was unveiled, it having been erected on the site of the Professor's residence, which had in the meantime been pulled down, on the foolish advice of some cranks, who



prophesied that, if not removed, the house would soon fall to the ground from decay—which was the most absurd assertion to make, the house being, to the present writer's personal knowledge, most substantially built and in thorough repair, for Professor Fawcett had, shortly before his death, spent a large sum on structural and decorative improvements, and thus made it fit to stand another hundred years. But the whims of some folks are inscrutable.

Before quitting the neighbourhood of Vauxhall Park let us cast a glance on the opposite side of the road. The houses present no features of interest, and are overtopped by the tall chimney of a brewery behind them. But what attracts particular attention is a gigantic glass bottle placed horizontally on the roof of the brewery, and turning on a pivot. Occasionally this bottle has been lighted up at night with electric light. Formerly also, but not lately, an equally gigantic bottle, made of oiled silk, could be seen floating up high in the air. Of course these displays may advertise the business; whether, however, it is not *infra dig.* for a large company to resort to the 'golden boot' and 'teapot' and 'expanding elephant' style of sign of the small tradesman is another question. But we cannot call in question the fact that the establishment of works like a brewery and a laundry has totally destroyed the residential character of the road, which further suffered in this respect by the construction of a tramway, laid down in the road in spite of the almost unanimous opposition of the most respectable frontagers, and the palpably demonstrated absence of any need for such a means of conveyance. Yet the Lambeth Vestry,

in the arbitrary exercise of their power, disregarded the wishes of the inhabitants of the road; and the Parliamentary Committee, caring little for the matter one way or another, but giving way to the public clamour of those whom the construction of the line could not in any way affect injuriously, sanctioned the line—which has depreciated property along the route, whilst the shareholders, as they watch the cars as they pass along, often nearly empty, must feel anything but comfortable.

It was somewhere about this spot that the branch of the Effra, referred to on a former page, crossed the South Lambeth Road, passing under a bridge of three arches, as it would appear from an old plan in my possession. Thence the river continued its course westward to the Wandsworth Road, then called the Kingston Highway, and finally reached the Thames near Nine Elms. River and bridge disappeared long ago.

A great change in the aspect of this part of the South Lambeth Road is looming in the near future. Whilst these pages were passing through the press the South - Western Railway Company purchased the triangular piece of ground whose apex north is at the railway bridge, and whose base is half of Miles Street to the south, while its sides are formed by the South Lambeth Road to the east, and the railway to the west. Most of the houses facing the park will be pulled down, and flats erected on their sites; whilst the gardens at the back will be turned into a coal-yard. The present amenity of the northern end of this South Lambeth Road will not thereby be increased.

Keeping on the same side of the road, and passing Miles Street, a mean thoroughfare leading to the

Wandsworth Road, we have before us St. Ann's Church. This church was originally erected in 1794, and is, next to St. Mary's, Lambeth, and St. Andrew's, Stockwell, the most ancient church in Lambeth, there being at the date of its erection no other Church of England building between Lambeth Palace and Clapham. Two of the most noted founders were Sir Charles Blicke above mentioned, and Mr. Dollond, of telescope fame. Till 1869 it was known as South Lambeth Chapel, when it was consecrated by the late Bishop Sumner as St. Ann's Church on the condition that as soon as possible it should be altered and enlarged; for originally it was a building of the most hideous architecture, more like a barn than a church. But it was not till the year 1876 that steps were taken to carry out the above condition. Considerable contributions, including one of £500 given by Mrs. Beaufoy, and the proceeds of a bazaar held in that lady's grounds, then enabled the Vicar to put the work in hand and transform the barn into the present elegant structure, which, however, yet wants the tower to complete it. Internally, also, the church presents a handsome appearance. The costs of the renovation amounted to between £3,000 and £4,000. The Vicar's house adjoins the church, and rather dwarfs it, for it is a very high building, looking from a distance like a massive and lofty tower.

Next to the Vicar's house, which in its turn has been dwarfed by the building about to be mentioned, stands the newly-erected factory of Brand and Co., the manufacturers of invalids' food. It occupies the site of six houses which went by the name of Lawn Place, and one of which was, till it was taken down, the residence of

Mrs. Riddell, the novelist. Though the old houses were mean and ugly, still, they were interesting as an old bit of country-road architecture ; whilst the new factory, in its utter plainness of style, looks like barracks.

On the other, or eastern, side of the road stands a row of red-brick houses, built some fifteen years ago on Mr. Beaufoy's land, which, as we mentioned above, was here enclosed by a high brick wall, over the top of which you could see lofty and ancient trees waving their graceful boughs—alas ! for ever gone now. The ground-floors of these houses are used as shops, and just after passing them you will see a large gate leading into a timber-yard, and by the side of this large gate you will see a small door to what is a great curiosity at the present day, and probably the only one of its kind now existing, viz., an old watchman's box—not a wooden but a stone one, with a stone and cement roof. It is built in the form of a quadrant, or fourth part of a circle, and the Charley who sat in it had not much room for stretching his legs unless he put them outside. We all know what kind of creatures the Charleys were, and that they were looked upon by the bucks of the day as proper subjects for sometimes very rough jokes. But genial spirits when inclined for a little spree would occasionally have some innocent fun with the sleepy watchmen. The Mr. Beaufoy of the day when they were still in existence—who was a tall, powerful man—would sometimes, on passing the watchman's box above described at night, take hold by his coat-collar of the Charley indulging in a snooze in his box and gently drop him over the fence—the high wall which afterwards surrounded the Beaufoy estate was

then not yet built—a proceeding to which the watchman, when he had learnt to appreciate Mr. Beaufoy's humour at its proper commercial value, had no objection whatever, for on presenting himself next morning at the gentleman's residence with a well-prepared statement of the discomfort he had suffered—'For you see, sir,' he would say, 'I was so fast asleep when you dropped me over that I remained a long time on the damp ground, which has made my rheumatiz very bad'—he would quickly be consoled on Mr. Beaufoy handing him a sovereign to compensate him for the inconvenience. Probably he wished he had to undergo it every night.

We now pass a row of very old houses, with long gardens in front, and a beautifully open space of gardens at the back, interspersed with ancient and lofty trees—a greenery, in fact, exceptional in this overbuilt London. The last of the houses may be called a *cottage ornée*. The occupier seems to have foreign tastes, for some seventeen years ago he built a large and elegant balcony, quite in the Continental style, in front of his first-floor windows—which first-floor, by the way, contains a choice and curious library. But his first experience on the balcony was not propitious, he having forgotten the London rough and loafer. He was in the habit of walking up and down the balcony, smoking a cigar. One day, when so engaged, a few idlers stopped in front of his garden fence, some forty feet from the house, and began to indulge in jeers and hootings, to which the gentleman paid no attention. The first fools soon attracted others, and in less than a quarter of an hour the pavement and roadway in front of the house were

blocked with a crowd of ruffianism such as may be seen in Fleet Street when the counterfeit of a more than usually brutal prizefighter has been stuck up in a sporting paper's window. Soon the crowd began to indulge in language not meant for ears polite, some of the milder exclamations being, 'Wot're you doing up there?' 'Does your mother know you're out?' 'Come down here and have your nose pulled!' 'Who's your hatter?'—the gentleman wore a large sombrero.

This went on for some time. Neighbours began to put their heads out of their windows, passing cabbies stopped to see the fun. Still the gentleman coolly walked up and down, smoking his cigar; but when some of the roughs began opening the garden gate, or trying to climb over the fence, he thought it time to interfere. So he went down to the gate, not to have his nose pulled, but to look for the police. Of course, he ought to have known better than to look for a policeman when he is wanted, and after waiting for a quarter of an hour for one, the mob jeering and howling at him, he had to send his servant all the way to Vauxhall for one, who, when he leisurely made his appearance, proved a very mild bobby indeed, for he told the ruffians, male and female, in a paternal manner to 'move on,' of which they took not the slightest notice. And so the gentleman, seeing he could get no assistance from the police, thought discretion the better part of valour, and shut himself up within doors. The mob, seeing the fun was over, gradually dispersed. And this happened on a light summer's evening in a leading thoroughfare of South London. Well may the inhabitants ask, Where are the police?



To prevent the recurrence of such an annoyance the gentleman had the balcony enclosed with stained glass, so that now he can take his walk without being molested by the rabble. In the garden at the back of his house there are four large vines, producing in favourable years in the open air large quantities of eatable grapes; there is also a fine bearing pear-tree, and a fig-tree with a crown thirty feet in diameter—unfortunately, its fruit never ripens. There is a local tradition that early in this century Mrs. Jordan, the famous actress, when under the protection of the Duke of Clarence, afterwards William IV., occupied this house. Evidently a lover of good wine once lived in it, if wine-bins, very large for the size of the house, with thick heavy doors studded with large iron nails, and strong hasps and staples, prove anything.

But let us pursue our walk. We next come to two terraces of four modern houses each, built early in the seventies. Before their erection the spot had quite a countrified look, several old but picturesque cottages, such as Rose Cottage, Warleigh Cottage, and others, standing thereon. But the builder was called in, and he soon spoiled the appearance of things. Between the two terraces is a private road, with a high fence and gates at the South Lambeth Road end, leading down to Percy Villa, the residence of Mr. Lionel Brough, the well-known actor, who needs not our praise; his extraordinary *vis comica* has rendered his name famous all over the world. Percy Villa was once tenanted by Fauntleroy, the unlucky banker, who wrote other people's names in fits of abstraction, and was hanged for it.

Nearly opposite to the road leading to Percy Villa stands a building which, though not an eyesore architecturally, is a sore to the neighbourhood in many respects. If we did not know from personal experience how difficult it is to induce people to combine in order to oppose a threatened nuisance, or even an injury, we should wonder how the inhabitants of the South Lambeth Road ever allowed a Board School to be erected in the frontage of their road. But there it stands, after sweeping away neat cottages and gardens full of flowers, a terrible annoyance to the tenants of the houses in its immediate neighbourhood. The School Board should to some extent have considered the feelings of the inhabitants, who are heavily rated to support their schools, the benefits of which are so delusive, for never were the streets infested with more ruffian-like hobble-dehoys and loose girls under eighteen years of age than they are now—lads and lasses who, we have a right to assume, have all passed through Board Schools. To bring hundreds of children, who from their home-training are ill-behaved, and who at Board Schools receive no instruction in manners, into a respectable road is a crying injustice; to pour them forth into the road after school hours without supervision of any kind, allowing them to indulge in rough horseplay, howling, screaming, throwing stones, breaking bell-pulls and windows, shows in what contempt the ratepayers are held by the School Board. Their schools should always be erected in localities where there is no valuable property, for that is always depreciated whenever one of these schools is set up in their midst. And it is somewhat trying for a person's temper to see the value

of his property reduced, and then to be rated to support the cause of the mischief.

Next door to the school is a timber-yard, and by the side of it—not in the South Lambeth Road itself, but standing only a little way back, so as to be visible from the road—is Wheatsheaf Hall, in Wheatsheaf Lane, a narrow lane leading to Hartington Road. Wheatsheaf Hall is the centre of a temperance mission, with many agencies connected therewith, founded by Mr. W. S. Caine, M.P. The original hall was a country house, with which, for the purposes of the mission, Wheatsheaf House and Hartington House were afterwards incorporated; but all those buildings having in course of time become ruinous to such an extent that some of the rooms of Wheatsheaf Hall had to be locked up, as it was unsafe to use them, it was early in 1896 decided to pull down all the old buildings, and erect on their site an entirely new hall. A fund amounting to some £3,000 was raised by subscription, and about the end of the same year the elegant and rather picturesque new hall was opened. In the old hall the nucleus of the first free library in Lambeth was established by Mr. Caine. When the Free Libraries Act had been adopted by the ratepayers, he transferred the Wheatsheaf Library, consisting of several thousand books, to the commissioners, of whom he was one himself, and afterwards presented them with a complete technical library of great value.

A few steps farther on we come, on the opposite side of the road, to the large gates opening into the vast establishment of Messrs. Beaufoy, manufacturers of vinegar, British wines, and other products of a

kindred nature. Their works, as already mentioned, were originally at Cuper's Gardens, the site of the present Waterloo Road. The dwelling-house standing within the high wall surrounding these works stands on the site of the original Caroon House, built and inhabited by Sir Noel Caroon, the greater portion of which was still standing early in this century; it then shared the fate of all deserted mansions: it became a ladies' school, and remained such till it was in 1809 or 1810 pulled down by Mr. Beaufoy, and the present mansion erected on its site. Outwardly without any architectural pretensions, it contains internally what is a greater glory to it than any architect's devices could confer on it—a glory which confers honour, not on the builder, but on the owner—one of the finest private libraries in London, comprising upwards of 35,000 volumes, including many choice and rare works, such as the first three editions of Shakespeare, and many other classics of the greatest scarcity. It is particularly rich in topographic works; and those referring to London, beautifully bound, and enriched with many additional engravings and water-colour drawings specially prepared for them, are enough to make the antiquary's mouth water. The books are arranged in beautiful mahogany cases in three noble rooms, one of them really a grand and lofty hall, lighted from above, with a painted ceiling. It would take years to become acquainted with the literary and artistic treasures stored up in the mansion. The founder of this choice library was Henry B. H. Beaufoy, whose marble bust stands in the Guildhall, and who presented to the Corporation the cabinet of London Traders', Tavern,

and Coffee-house tokens current in the seventeenth century. They consist of tokens of iron, lead, tin, brass, copper, and leather, comprising in all 1,174 pieces. These tokens are not only curiosities in themselves, but a record of the old topography and history of London, a key to streets and localities long since lost.

The road, here called Old South Lambeth Road, makes a sharp bend to the left, and becomes very narrow. At the corner of the Dorset Road, which leads to the Clapham Road, there stood till recently a fine old house, surrounded by large grounds, for many years the residence of a Baptist minister. On his death the voracious speculative builder got hold of the house, levelled it to the ground, and its site and the lawns and gardens belonging to it are now covered with commonplace, monotonous, and small houses.

When the construction of the tramway was under discussion, this bend and the narrowness of the road were two of the objections raised against it, but an obliging Vestry and a complaisant Board of Works undertook to remove them by constructing a new, straight, and wide road—of course, at the ratepayers' expense—to a point where it would debouch into a wider part of the old road. To do this a number of houses had to be purchased and pulled down, including three picturesque cottages, all overgrown with ivy; and thus one of the prettiest bits of the South Lambeth Road was destroyed. Of course the old road remained, but as everybody, except persons who want to go to Dorset Road, which has its commencement in the bend, or who have business in one of the old houses, now goes down the new bit of road, the original road is left out

in the cold; the shopkeepers who established themselves when the road was *the* thoroughfare now can only bewail their fate, and try to get rid of their businesses as best they may. Private interest, it is said, must give way to public benefit; I hope the sufferers are public-spirited enough to see it in that light, and thus console themselves.

In the new road high and gloomy mansions, divided into flats, have been built. Adjoining them, on the west side of the road, a building has been erected for the Lambeth Free Library and Reading Room; the entire cost of the building and site was generously defrayed by the late Mr. Henry Tate, J.P., of Streatham Common. The elevation is an elegant design, and the materials used are red bricks with Portland stones for dressings, green slates for the roofs, and copper domes to two turrets. There are spacious reading-rooms, a large room, or rather hall, for the library, and a commodious librarian's residence. Such liberality as was shown by Mr. Tate is certainly to be commended, but whether public libraries and reading-rooms really do all the good that is expected of them is another question. The borrowers of books chiefly borrow novels, and the visitors to the reading-rooms come more to lounge and pass the time or, worse, to study the sporting news as a guide to them in their betting ventures. However, Lambeth decided to have such institutions, and has been fortunate, here and at other spots, to meet with generous patrons.

From this point the South Lambeth Road presents only regrettable aspects to the topographer; monotonous, unhistorical new houses have obliterated old and



interesting sites. Nearly opposite the Library there stood, till about twenty years ago, a house which was worthy a pilgrimage. But, alas! then it was pulled down to make room for grocers' and butchers' shops, and dreary streets of lodging-houses. Nothing remains to recall it but the name of one of the new streets, built on the site of the gardens, which once surrounded Turret House, the former home of the Tradescants and of Ducarel. When the house was advertised for sale by auction in the year 1880, some of the Lambethans appealed, through the press, to the public to save it from the destroyer's hands, but sentiment generally gives way to £ s. d., and so the road and the locality lost one of its most interesting relics.

John Tradescant, the eminent naturalist, is supposed to have been a Dutchman. He settled in England about the beginning of the reign of James I. He and his son were both great travellers, and the father is said to have gone through Europe, Turkey, Greece, Egypt, and Barbary. The son collected a museum of curiosities, of which—and of the plants cultivated in his garden at Turret House—a catalogue was printed in 1656, under the name of 'Museum Tradescantianum,' to which portraits of both father and son were prefixed. In 1629 the elder Tradescant was appointed gardener to Charles I. The museum was frequently visited by persons of rank, who became benefactors thereto; among these were Charles I., his Queen, Archbishop Laud, George Duke of Buckingham, Robert and William Cecil, Earls of Salisbury, and John Evelyn. The father died in 1638, the son in 1662.

The celebrated Elias Ashmole records in his diary

that during their lifetime the younger Tradescant and his wife often discussed to whom they should leave their museum. On December 14, 1659, Ashmole wrote in his diary: 'This afternoon they gave their scrivener instructions to draw a deed of gift of the said closet of curiosities to me'; and on the 15th, 'Mr. Tradescant and his wife sealed and delivered to me the deed of gift of all his rarities.' Mrs. Tradescant, however, on her husband's death would not surrender them, and Ashmole preferred a bill in Chancery against her, and obtained possession of them. On this he removed from the Temple to Turret House. How he obtained the house is not on record. He added a noble room to Tradescant's Ark, as it was then called, and adorned the chimney with his arms, impaling those of Sir William Dugdale, whose daughter was his third wife. The loss of her husband's treasures seems to have preyed on Mrs. Tradescant's mind, and on April 3, 1678, she was found drowned in a pond in the grounds. She was buried in a vault in Lambeth Churchyard. Ashmole in 1683 presented the University of Oxford with his collection of curiosities, where they form part of the Ashmolean Museum, which also contains his library and MSS., left to it by Ashmole's will. He died in 1692. Ashmole was a learned and a liberal patron of learning, but lamentably tinctured with the superstitious credulity of his age; he believed in astrological predictions, dreams, charms, and occult influences. Sir William Watson and other members of the Royal Society visited Tradescant's Gardens in 1749, but found very few trees remaining which appeared to have been planted by the Tradescants. But when the

grounds came into the hands of the builder, there were still some fine trees on them, especially a magnificent cedar. The estate extended down to Albert Terrace, and along the South Lambeth Road was enclosed in a park fence.

Connected with Turret House was another house, long the residence of Dr. Andrew Colbée Ducarel, who was born in Normandy in 1713, whence his father, bringing his young son with him, came to England, and resided at Greenwich. Young Ducarel became an Eton scholar, and afterwards went to Oxford, where he greatly distinguished himself, and had various dignities and offices conferred on him. When the Society of Antiquaries was incorporated in 1755, he was appointed one of its first Fellows. He published a number of topographical and antiquarian works, of which the best known are his 'Anglo-Norman Antiquities,' a 'History of Lambeth Palace' (he was its librarian), the histories of 'St. Katherine's Hospital' and 'Croydon Palace.' He died at his house in the South Lambeth Road, and was buried on the north side of the altar of St. Katherine's Church, near the Tower, taken down when the St. Katherine's Docks were built. The house was afterwards occupied by John Heseltine, Esq., a gentleman well known in the literary world in the third decade of this century. In the last stage of its existence the house had been a boys' school.

On a map representing the road as it was more than three hundred years ago, at a little distance south of the Tradescant site a pound is shown, and is, except a few cottages, all the road could show in the way of building. On the west side of the road is the modern Thorne

Road. At No. 4 there died in December, 1880, Miss Maria Innes, who, with her two sisters, Anne and Eliza, for about forty years compiled the peerage known as Sam's, and afterwards were connected with that of Lodge. They also compiled the elaborate index to Gilbert's 'History of Cornwall,' which has insured for that book a vitality it would not otherwise have enjoyed.

About this spot a rivulet must have crossed the South Lambeth Road, for on maps of the last century a bridge, called Lambeth Bridge, is shown. The land on the opposite side of Thorne Road, originally called by the strange name of Engeron Lane, where Albert Square now stands, was a green, called Bond Green, and early in this century there were yet cornfields about here. In fact, till about the middle of this century, the southern end of the South Lambeth Road was a regular country road, though a few good houses had been built along it, such as Beulah House, with an extensive garden at the back. It has now for some years been a steam-laundry. A little farther on is the Stockwell Baptist Chapel, a modern and handsome building with a noble portico. Lower down, crossing the main road from Lansdowne Gardens to the Clapham Road, is the Lansdowne Road, which originally was called Green Lane, and which at that time ran straight from the South Lambeth Road to the Wandsworth Road, or, as it was then called, the Kingston Highway. The portion of the Lansdowne Road from the South Lambeth to the Clapham Road is quite modern. The old portion of the Lansdowne Road still retains something of its once rural character, and the large nursery-grounds enclosed within the triangle

formed by the South Lambeth, Lansdowne, and Binglefield Roads are part of a farm, called Paradise Farm, which existed on the spot as late as the year 1830. The large modern house at the south-east corner of Lansdowne Road was, till the construction of the tramway drove the inmates away, a ladies' school; it afterwards became the headquarters of the Kennington Conservative Club and the Kennington Conservative Society, but has recently been occupied as a private residence again.

The land to the south of Tradescant's Gardens on the east, down to the Clapham Road, was till this century an open space known as South Lambeth Common; the triangular enclosed lawn to the south of the row of houses called the 'Crescent' is all that remains of the Common, which adjoined Stockwell Common, which also has totally disappeared under a load of houses. Commons situate near populous neighbourhoods are ever liable to trespass and infringement; squatters and land-grabbers on a small scale silently settle down on a desirable spot, and when challenged to surrender, they coolly rely on the maxim that possession is nine points of the law, and the owner of the land, whether private or public, is put to enormous expense for the assertion of his rights, with no chance of getting any damages out of the trespasser. And not only are men and women injured, but even the poor animals are wronged to such a degree as to have called forth the poet's fierce denunciation:

'The fault is great in man or woman  
That steals a goose from off the common;  
But say, who shall that man excuse  
Who steals the common from the goose?'

There is a scarce tract of four leaves in the British Museum entitled 'The Miraculous Recovery of a Dumb Man, or a Brief and True Relation of an extraordinary Distemper, which at Christmas, 1671, seized upon Mr Francis Culham of South Lambeth, Chyrurgeon, and took away his understanding and speech, and so continued for the space of four years and four months. With the wonderful Restauration on Fryday, the 12 of May, 1676, by the immediate hand of God.' This is attested by Drs. Parr (of Camberwell), Gale, Elias Ashmole, and several others. This sounds quite as good as the advertisements of the modern nostrum-sellers. As we have no data by which to allocate the 'Miraculous Recovery,' except the somewhat wide address of 'South Lambeth,' we have thus 'promiscuously' placed it at the end.

Here we will take our leave of the South Lambeth Road. Though we have had no important events, no stirring episodes to record of it, though there has been a deal of chronicling of small beer, the road still is an interesting one, even with its humble annals; and it is an important one to the inhabitants of London, for it is for West End and City travellers the most direct route to many suburban resorts of permanent interest and attraction. The visitors to the Derby specially appreciate it.



## XIX.

### WELLS AND SPRINGS IN OLD LONDON.

**I**MPROVEMENTS have their drawbacks: the grand drainage system of London is such a one, for whilst it must be admitted that it is superior to the cess-pools with which our ancestors were satisfied, it has wrought mischief by drying up nearly all the wells and springs which in former days supplied London with abundant and wholesome water. It is indeed surprising what an enormous number of springs once existed in the Metropolitan area. William Fitzstephen, who wrote in the reign of King Henry II. (1154-1189), said: ‘There are also round London, on the northern side, in the suburbs, excellent springs, the water of which is sweet, clear, and salubrious,

“ ‘Midst glistening pebbles gliding playfully ” ; amongst which Holywell, Clerkenwell, and St. Clement’s Well are of most note, and most frequently visited, as well by the scholars from the schools as by the youth of the City, when they go out to take the air in the summer evenings.’

But it was not only on the north side that springs were found. Stow justly says: ‘They had in every

street and lane of the city divers fair wells and springs, and after this manner was this city then served with sweet and fresh waters, which being since decayed [drainage schemes had already then been started], other means have been sought to supply the want.' And not only were the north of London and the City well supplied with springs, but they also abounded in Southwark and Lambeth\* and adjacent parts. But there is no doubt that in course of time, as buildings increased, and drains and cesspools had to be constructed, the wells became contaminated, and their water highly dangerous; hence the necessity of other supplies, the most important of which was the New River. The number of wells, as mentioned, was great; we will pass in review the most noted, omitting such as belonged to private buildings, except when, as in the case referred to in the note below, some peculiar circumstance calls for special mention of them. We begin with those in the City.

In 1282 Henry Wallis, mayor, according to Stow, made a 'fair conduit,' castellated, of stone over a well of sweet water in Cornhill. This conduit was also a prison, and called the Tun, because it somewhat resembled a tun standing on end. In 1491 the Tun was used as a conduit only, supplied with water by pipes

\* Curiously enough, while the writer was engaged on this chapter, the tiled floor of a garden room in the garden of his house at South Lambeth gave way, and disclosed a brick well 4 feet in diameter and 10 feet deep—probably much deeper—of course quite dry, but evidently of ancient date. For twenty-five years the writer has sat over this well without dreaming of its existence.

from Tyburn. The well was, it seems, abandoned, for it was planked over, and a timber cage and a pair of stocks placed on the top, to set night-walkers in. In course of time the cage and stocks went, and with them the well was forgotten. But on March 16, 1799, the pavement nearly opposite the front gate of the Royal Exchange was found to be sinking, and a large deep well was discovered. The water was of excellent quality. The top had not been secured by arch or brickwork, but only by planking. This, of course, was the well, with its cover of planks, mentioned by Stow. The goodness and abundance of the water induced the Ward of Cornhill to erect a pump on the spot, and so great seems to have been the enthusiasm created by this discovery that the Bank of England, the East India Company, the neighbouring fire-offices, together with the bankers and traders of Cornhill, all contributed their share towards the erection of this pump, still standing by the side of the Exchange—certainly a tremendous combination of wealth for so small a purpose.

The church of St. Olave in the Old Jewry was originally called St. Olave Upwell—taking that addition from a well which in time had a pump erected over it, which disappeared when the church was demolished.

When St. Mary Woolnoth Church was rebuilt in 1719 a fine spring, till then choked up, was rediscovered.

According to Stow, Holborn was full of springs. Says he: 'The said street is called High Oldborne Hill, and both sides thereof, together with all the ground adjoining that lie betwixt it and the river Thames, remain full of springs, so that water is there found at hand, and hard to be stopped in every house.' Stow

further records that when, in 1595, the north side of Fleet Street, between Chancery Lane and St. Dunstan's Church, was broken up to a depth of four feet, he saw an ancient pavement, resting on timbers 'driven very thick,' some being as black as coal, and others rotten as earth—which proves that the ground there, as in sundry other places in the City, was full of springs.

The palace of Bridewell took its name from its being near a spring called St. Bridget's or St. Bride's Well, a spring still maintaining its ancient reputation for sweetness of flavour.

Smithfield and its neighbourhood abounded with springs. There were Fagge's Well, on the west side of the river Fleet; Tod's Well, Rad's Well, and Loder's Well, which, however, when Stow wrote, were already so decayed and filled up that their places could hardly be discerned; all these springs helped to feed the Fleet River; the latter, in the neighbourhood of Smithfield, was also known as the River of Wells. In Smithfield itself there was a pond fed by springs, which went by the name of the Horsepool, because the inhabitants of that part of the City did there water their horses.

Clerkenwell was rich in springs. The parish, indeed, took its name from the Clerks' Well, and the well, which was not far from the west end of Clerkenwell Church, was so named from the parish clerks of London, who of old were accustomed there yearly to assemble and to perform dramatic representations from the Scriptures—miracle plays or mysteries. Strype, who wrote about 1720, says that the old well of Clerkenwell was still known among the inhabitants. A Mr. Crosse, a brewer, had the well enclosed with a high wall; the way to it was

through a little house, which was the watch-house. The well formerly had iron-work and brass cocks, which, in Strype's time, were cut off—probably had been stolen. The said writer tested the water, and found it 'excellently clear and sweet.' The water was suffered to run to waste for many years, but in 1800 a pump was erected on the east side of Ray Street, and an inscription placed on it, recalling the dramatic performances of the parish clerks. This part of the street having been rebuilt, the pump has disappeared with it.

The Knights Hospitallers of St. John were well supplied with water from springs they owned at Pentonville, whence it was conducted in quills, as the small leaden pipes were then called, to their priory.

The Skinners' Well was so called because the skinners of London there gave certain plays or mysteries yearly. It was near to the Clerks' Well, but its precise situation is at present unknown. Strype was of opinion that it was to the west of the church, and enclosed within certain houses there.

The well we mentioned above as Tod's Well was originally called Godewell, *i.e.*, Good Well; but Stow, copying from the 'Register of Clerkenwell,' a book written in the reign of King John, mistaking the form of the letter G, wrote Tod's Well, in which he has been followed by all succeeding writers, till the mistake was pointed out by Pinks in his 'History of Clerkenwell.' Goswell Street derives its name from this spring.

The Islington Spa was probably opened about the year 1683, and as the composition of the waters of this spring was somewhat similar to that of those of Tunbridge Wells, the place was also called New Tunbridge

Wells. It was laid out as a public garden for drinking the waters and amusement. The price of admission was threepence. In a burlesque poem, published in 1691, and attributed to Ned Ward, the place was called 'Islington Wells, or the Threepenny Academy.' In spite of this, it became in time a fashionable resort, the daughters of George II. frequenting it; and so, great was the number of aristocratic visitors. But the company appears, after all, to have been somewhat mixed. In the 'Humours of Tunbridge Wells,' published in 1734, we read of

'Light-fingered knaves, who pockets drill,  
Wits, captains, politicians, trulls,  
Sots, devotees, pimps, poets, gulls.'

Lady Mary W. Montague claimed the credit of having made the efficacy of the waters known to the public. There is a view of the gardens, engraved by G. Bickham, junior, in a folio volume of songs published about 1737, showing the company waiting round the quadrangle of the balustrades enclosing the well to be served, others walking in the gardens, which were irregularly planted with trees. The view is reproduced in Pinks' 'History of Clerkenwell.'

But the glories of the gardens gradually decayed. In 1826, when they had to a great extent been built over, the waters might still be drunk. The well was then enclosed by grotto-work, and to it there was a winding descent of several steps. In a little cell constructed in the grotto-work were testimonials to the virtues of the spring. But the spring had lost its former reputation, the public no longer patronized it, and what remained



of the gardens was leased to a builder, who erected two rows of houses, called Spa Cottages, on the site, including a tavern called the London Spa. This was demolished in October, 1897. The Spa House is at present a private residence; the well is contained in an out-building attached to the house, and still continues to flow. The Spa was situate close to the south-east of the New River Head.

Sadler's Well was before the Reformation famed for several extraordinary cures, and was thereupon accounted sacred, and called Holy Well. The priests belonging to the Priory of Clerkenwell made the people believe that the virtues of the water were due to their prayers. Upon the Reformation the well was closed up, visits to it being accounted mere superstition, and thus it faded out of remembrance. But in 1683 Mr. Sadler, digging in his garden at his music-house, the theatre since then known as Sadler's Wells, rediscovered the spring. It was found covered up with a flat stone, supported by four oaken posts, and having under it a large well of stone, arched over and curiously carved. The water was of a ferruginous nature, though not so strongly impregnated with iron as that of Tunbridge Wells; it was strongly recommended by the physicians of the day, so that 500 to 600 people attended every morning to drink it. Its success excited considerable jealousy among the proprietors of other spas, and it had not long been opened before there appeared an abusive broadside, entitled 'An Exclamation from Tunbridge and Epsom against the new found Wells at Islington; London: Printed for John How, 1684,' wherein the publication of the discovery is denounced as a 'devilish,

a damnable, a horrid plot to persuade people . . . that Islington forsooth is commenced Epsom per saltum, as fools become physicians, and golden dunces wooden doctors at Leyden; that the juice of a few cow-turds mixt with a sham of steel-dust, and steeped in a new vamped well, that in all likelihood was an old house of office, can be effectual as our wonder-working fountains that taste of cold iron and breathe pure nitre and sulphur.' Various other publications sought to bring the water into disrepute. How long Sadler remained there after the discovery of the well has not been clearly ascertained; but in 1699 an advertisement appeared in the *Post Boy* and the *Flying Post*, which read: 'Sadler's excellent steel waters, having been obstructed for some years past, are now opened and current again, and the waters are found to be in their full vigour. . . . They have for several years been known . . . to be very effectual for the cure of all hectic and hypochondriacal heat, for beginning consumptions, for scurvy, diabetes, for bringing away gravel, stones in the kidneys, etc.'

In 1811 the wells were still frequented; the subscription for the water was one guinea a season. The spring was then enclosed by an artificial grotto of flints and shells, which was entered by a rustic gate; there was a lodging-house to board invalids, and in the garden a breakfast-room with a small orchestra. Since then Sadler's Wells has been known as a theatre only.

Not far from Sadler's Well was the Cold Bath Well, the site of which was afterwards, it is said, when the prison of that name was erected, occupied by the treadmill

worked by the prisoners.\* The spring was discovered in 1697 by Walter Baynes, a large freeholder in the district, whose name is commemorated in Baynes Row. He converted the spring into a bath, which was stated to be of the nature of St. Magnus's in the north and St. Winifred's in Wales, and famed for curing most nervous diseases. The hours of bathing were from five o'clock in the morning until one o'clock in the afternoon, and the charge was half-a-crown to persons who were so weak as to require the use of a chair, which was suspended from the ceiling, so that it could be lowered into the water and drawn up again. To such as did not require this aid the charge was two shillings. Mr. Baynes resided till his death, in 1745, in the bath-house, which was a building, 'handsome, though old,' with three pointed gables, the centre one of which was surmounted by a vane, and legibly inscribed on its tympanum were the words, 'The Cold Bath.' The house stood in a garden, enclosed by a brick wall, with a summer house, resembling a tower, at each angle. This bath was in full use until quite recently, though not in the same building.

In 1761 there were a few straggling houses near the Cold Bath Fields and in the Bagnigge Wells Road (now King's Cross Road), and in the midst of them Black Mary's Hole, so called from a negro woman of the name of Mary, who lived there in a small circular hut, built with stones. There was a spring there, which as late as forty years ago was preserved in the front

\* We cannot understand this statement by Pinks and Mayhew; between the Bath and the prison there is Baynes Row, and the former was in the house, which stood at a considerable distance from the latter.

garden of the house numbered 3, Spring Place, Bagnigge Wells Road. There is no trace of it now. Another authority says that when Spring Place was built in 1818, the builder converted the well into a cesspool for the drainage of the houses.

At Bagnigge Wells was the country residence of Nell Gwynn. In 1760 two mineral springs were discovered on the property, and Nell's house and gardens were opened to the public for drinking the waters, as the 'Royal Bagnigge Wells.' The waters were sold at threepence a glass, or eightpence the gallon. The description given in a pamphlet published at the time makes one long for the good old rural times. 'The place,' says the brochure, 'where the waters issue is environed with hills and rising ground every way but to the south, and consequently screened from the inclemency of the more chilling winds. Primrose Hill rises westward; on the north-west are the more distant elevations of Hampstead and Highgate; on the north and north-east there is a pretty sudden ascent to Islington and the New River Head, and a near prospect of London makes up the rest of the circumference, with the magnificent structure of St. Paul full in front, and nearly on a level with Bagnigge Wells House.' In 1813 Bagnigge Wells, with the furniture and fixtures in it, was sold, and you would now in vain seek for any vestige of this once famous resort of health.

Opposite the spot formerly known as Battle Bridge, King's Cross, was the well of St. Chad, whose day in the calendar is March 2. He was Bishop of Lichfield, where he died in 672. The well at Battle Bridge received its name—it was then usual to dedicate wells to

saints—because it was supposed that the quality of its water was similar to that of a well which had cured St. Chad of an obstinate disease, and was said to be useful in cases of liver attacks, dropsy, and scrofula. About the middle of the last century, 800 to 900 persons used to come every morning to drink the water, and as it was then sixpence a glass the spring was a profitable investment, though in the end, when public patronage became slack, the water was sold at one halfpenny a glass. On the building was an inscription, ‘St. Chad’s Well,’ and inside the gates an octagon board proclaimed, ‘Health restored and preserved.’ In the early part of this century an ancient female, known as the Lady of the Well, used to invite passers-by to enter and ‘be made whole.’ The water was heated in a large cauldron, and thence it was drawn by a cock into glasses. In the pump-room was a portrait in oil of a stout, comely personage, with a ruddy countenance; he wore a cloak and red nightcap, and was supposed to represent St. Chad. A forecourt or garden adjoined Gray’s Inn Road; next to the forecourt were the house and pump-room, and beyond them was the garden, originally very extensive, and abounding with fruit-trees, shrubs, and flowers in great variety. In 1840 an attempt was made to revive the popularity of the well, but in spite of the portrait of the fat butcher—I mean, of St. Chad—and medical puffs, the healing waters were neglected and shut up, the trees of the garden were cut down, and the site covered with dingy houses; and nothing remains to indicate the site but St. Chad’s Place, a narrow passage beside the King’s Cross Station of the Metropolitan Railway.

There was another St. Chad's Well at Shadwell, from which, in fact, the locality is supposed to derive its name. It soon fell into disuse, but was rediscovered in 1745 by Mr. Walter Berry, when sinking a well in Sun Tavern Fields, and a Dr. Linden wrote a pamphlet to prove it could cure every disease. It was found useful in cutaneous diseases, but soon went out of fashion medicinally; however, it was found of service in certain manufactures, and employed for extracting salts, and for preparing a liquor with which calico-printers fix their colours.

In Stepney Fields there was as late as early in this century a famous spring and pond, originally called Rogue's Well, which eventually was softened down into Rhodes Well, and the site of which is still commemorated by Rhodes Well Road. The spring and pond were absorbed by the Regent's Canal, which passes over the spot.

Coming nearer to London again, there was close to Postern Gate on Tower Hill (it is shown on Aggas's Map) a descent by several stone steps to an excellent spring, known as the Postern Spring. Postern Gate had been erected soon after the Conquest, but in consequence of the alterations made in the locality by Longchamp, the Bishop of Ely and Chancellor of England, the safety of the postern was affected, and it fell down in 1440, and was replaced by a mean building of timber, which also in course of time decayed, and its site was marked by a few posts to guard the foot-way from horses and carriages. Now nothing remains; not even the spring.

St. Agnes le Clare Fields, near Hoxton, were so



called from a spring dedicated to that saint, which for a time was converted into a cold bath. In 1622 it was valued at 40s. per annum. St. Agnes is one of the most highly venerated saints in the calendar; she was beheaded at the early age of thirteen, under Diocletian, in 306. She appeared to her parents, whilst praying at her tomb, clad in a garment of glory, and accompanied by a lamb of the purest white. Her name corresponding in Latin with that of this animal, she is always represented with one by her side. On the fast held on St. Agnes's Day (January 21), two of the whitest lambs that can be procured are shorn, their fleeces hallowed, and converted into white cloth, which is sold to newly-appointed archbishops for making their palls. But as the wool from the two lambs is not sufficient for the purpose, the Pontiffs allow as much admixture of less holy wool. If the L.C.C. had any authority at Rome, they would be bound to summon the Pope for selling adulterated articles. Till within recent times the portion of Old Street between the City Road and Hoxton was called St. Agnes le Clare Street.

In Aldgate there was within the gate itself a very deep well of fine water; is it that which supplies Aldgate pump?

Well Street, parallel with the west side of Wellclose Square, is said to be so called from a well in Goodman's Fields, which, however, is at some distance from Well Street. The latter more probably derived its name from a well in Wellclose Square, as probably the square itself took its name from such a well, which has totally disappeared.

In Shoreditch, where Holywell Lane now stands,

there was once a fine spring, which in the middle of the last century was choked up with soil and a hill of rubbish, called Holywell Mount. Miraculous virtues were in ancient times attributed to it. Close to it stood an abbey of Benedictine nuns, ruins of which were still to be seen in the last century.

Let us return to the north of London. St. Pancras had a famous well, situate close to the old church of St. Pancras, surrounded by a large garden laid out in long straight walks, between hedges and rows of trees, forming nine alleys altogether, which were used by the visitors for promenading. In the bills issued by the proprietors it was said that the waters were surprisingly successful in the most obstinate cases of scurvy, king's evil, leprosy, and all other skin diseases. It is indeed surprising that, with wells in and round London in such numbers, and all endowed with such healing virtues—according to the prospectuses—any sickness or disease continued to lurk amidst the population, just as it does now, though, instead of wells, we have patent medicines advertised to cure all bodily ailments. The proprietors of springs in those days understood the art of puffing as well as any of the modern medicine-men. There appear to have been five distinct springs at St. Pancras, respectively called Pancras, Bristol, Bath, Pyrmont, and Spa. The waters of the first two were sold and delivered to any part of London at 6s., the Bath at 7s. 6d., and the last two at 14s., per dozen. At the office near Bride Lane, Fleet Street, where the waters could be ordered, could also be seen five stones instantly discharged by drinking the Pancras mineral waters—which must have been as convincing to

inquirers as was the custode's answer to the tourist to whom he had shown the sword with which Balaam smote the ass. 'But I thought,' said the traveller, 'that Balaam only wished for a sword.' 'Just so,' replied the custode; 'and this is the very sword he wished for.' A view of St. Pancras Wells was published in 1730. Gradually the fame of the waters faded away, the gardens were built upon, and in the sixties of this century the Midland Railway invaded the district, trespassing even on the churchyard of Old St. Pancras Church, and the wells are now a thing of the past.

At the north end of Via de Aldewyche, now Drury Lane, there was a fine spring, the village fountain, roofed over and surmounted by a cross.

Turning northwards again towards Canonbury, we find that there were in that locality medicinal springs, which induced persons to become residents in the neighbourhood, one of the most noted of whom was Richard de Cloudesley, who was a great benefactor to the district, and whose name is locally preserved. In a meadow at Canonbury named Cowlese there were springs the water of which was carried in pipes to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, in Smithfield. These springs were fed by numerous springs then existing in the neighbourhood of Highbury.

Going a long way west to Bayswater, and inquiring into the origin of its name, chroniclers tell us that it derived it from Baynard, who built Baynard's Castle in Upper Thames Street. 'He also obtained a grant of land to the north-west of the city, where there were some pleasant and plentiful springs, which afterwards supplied water to some of the London conduits, and to

which the name of Baynard's\* water was given, and which, in course of time, was shortened to Bayswater.' Such is the tradition, but it is open to doubt. In 1844 the chief spring still existed, and afforded a plentiful supply of water to some houses in Oxford Street. It was situated in a garden about half a mile to the west of the Edgware Road; it was covered by a circular building in good condition, and the pipes continued in a sound condition, though laid down several centuries ago. From the same source Kensington Palace, about a century ago, received a part of its supply; but on the establishment of the Chelsea Waterworks its use was abandoned.

We now proceed to the spring at Kilburn. It was discovered in 1710, and possessed strong medicinal properties, being intensely saline, and strongly charged with magnesia, according to an analysis published in *Philos. Trans.* lxxxiii. A tea-house with garden was, of course, soon erected, which was still famous within the last sixty years, but has now disappeared. The well was somewhere between Kensal Green Lane and Kilburn Lane, leading to Hampstead, and for a time was much resorted to. The locality was a favourite retreat of Oliver Goldsmith. The spring rose about twelve feet below the surface, and was in course of time enclosed in

\* The name Bayswater is supposed by some to be derived from the original owner of the land, called Bay, not Baynard; the names of Baybolle and Bayard appear in various old legal documents as owners of land there. But bay is also an obsolete designation for a 'pond head, to keep in good store of water;' and as the water of a good many springs was collected on that spot, the name may simply signify the 'head of water,' as we speak of the New River Head.

a large brick reservoir, erected, as the date on the key-stone of the arch over the door showed, in 1714. The water collected in the well was usually of the depth of five or six feet, but in a dry summer from three to four only, when its purgative quality was increased.

The Hampstead avenue known as Well Walk, and the Wells Tavern, keep in remembrance the wells for which the locality was famous as early as the commencement of the last century. Physicians praised their virtues to the skies, but analysis showed that they scarcely differed from pure spring water. They benefited, it was said, visitors, and therefore retained their reputation to the early part of this century; but the amenities of the locality, its general salubrity, the mingling in the gay company, which made the individual forget the usual cares of existence, and the many amusements provided by the proprietors of the various springs, to all of which music and dancing-rooms were attached—all these attractions, really external to the wells themselves, had more to do with the beneficial effects of visits to Hampstead wells than their waters ever had. During the last century rank and fashion flocked to Hampstead, but towards the end of the century the ‘quality’ forsook it, and the dwellers east of Temple Bar alone patronized it. In 1801 John Bliss, a surgeon of Hampstead, endeavoured to revive the reputation of the wells, and a few years later a Mr. Goodwin, another local practitioner, discovered two new medicinal springs, whose virtues were highly extolled in a pamphlet he wrote thereon, and the moribund glories of Hampstead wells were for a time galvanized into a temporary show of renewed life. But it was too late. Fashion is

capricious, and infallibly tires of its most cherished pets. As the means of travelling multiplied and expanded, the patrons of wells and springs pretending to healing powers went farther afield, and Hampstead was left in the lurch, with nothing but a few names to recall its former hygienic character.

In 1706, when the wells were at the height of their reputation, a comedy entitled 'Hampstead Heath' was performed at Drury Lane Theatre, and if the author honestly drew the portraits of the frequenters of the wells, they must have been a fast lot indeed; and we have no doubt they were, for the licentiousness of those days is notorious. Arabella, one of the principal characters in the play, says: 'Well, this Hampstead's a charming place! To dance all night at the Wells, and to be treated at Mother Huff's, to have presents made me at the raffling-shops, and then to take a walk in Cane Wood with a man of wit that's not over-rude! But to be five or six miles from one's husband! Marriage were a happy state could one always be five or six miles from one's husband!' The Mother Huff referred to was better known in the gossiping literature of the time by the less equivocal name of 'Mother Damnable'; she kept a house of accommodation. The raffling-shops are alluded to in the *Tatler* thus: 'I am diverted from my train of discourse by letters from Hampstead, which give me an account of a late institution there under the name of a raffling-shop.'

A once famous well at Hampstead was the Shepherd's Well, arched over and with rails round it, which furnished pure and clear water to the inhabitants of the neighbourhood; but when the New River Company



began to supply it with water, the well was abandoned, and when tunnels were excavated under the hill it was almost dried up.

Of the springs in Highgate which feed the ponds we have spoken in a previous article on Old London Watercourses. In Southwood Lane, Highgate, there were wells of some celebrity in former times for the purpose of bathing weak eyes—being strongly impregnated with iron; the water was sold in London as ‘Highgate eye-water.’

At Tottenham there were three wells of some note in their day, in a brickfield on the west side of the main road, near the footpath leading past the Wesleyan Chapel, and across the field to Philip Lane. Bedwell, in his history of the parish, speaks of St. Loy’s Well as being in his time nothing else but a deep pit, ‘which was within memory cleaned out, and at the bottom was found a fair great stone, which had certain letters or characters on it, but being broken by the negligence of the workmen, it was not known what they were or meant.’ Since then the condition of the well has not improved; it has become a dirty pool of water, full of mud and rubbish, though it was bricked up on all sides, square, and about four feet deep. The water was said to have fine medicinal properties, and to be similar to Cheltenham waters. An ‘offertory’ was attached to the spring, but it has long since disappeared.

In a field opposite the vicarage house was a spring called Bishop’s Well, the water of which was said never to freeze, and of which the common people related many wonderful cures.

At Tottenham Wood—now forming part of the

Alexandra Palace grounds—there was once a famous medicinal spring, known as St. Dunstan's Well. Whether this was the spring mentioned by Norden, and which originally gave Muswell Hill its name, we cannot tell—probably it was. There was a chapel close to it, dating from the reign of Henry II., which was a much frequented spot of pilgrimage, visited by many Scotchmen, because a King of Scots was traditionally said to have been cured by the water of the well, then known as Mus-well, of a painful and tedious disease. Pilgrimages to the spring were common in Queen Mary's days, and characterized by gross licentiousness, so that the Vicar of Croydon could preach openly that there was as much immorality at Mousewell as in the stews at Bankside, near London Bridge. Friar Donald says: 'Camden preached at St. Paul's Cross that Our Lady was a virgin, and yet at her pilgrimages was made many a foul meeting.' There were really two wells, but though only a few yards asunder, their waters differed in quality; in more recent and less superstitious times, however, their medicinal properties were denied. By the united and ceaseless overflowings of the wells a rivulet was formed, named after them Mosel, which, descending the hill, took a devious course through Hornsey and Tottenham, and thus found its way into the river Lea.

Maitland alludes to a spring near Hackney, the water of which was carried by pipes to the conduit at Aldgate. In the latter part of the seventeenth century, on digging a cellar for a new house near Charles Square, a medicinal spring was discovered; but in spite of medical recommendation, it never attained any reputation. At Shad-

well, to which we have already referred when speaking of St. Chad's Well in that locality, there was, besides this latter, another spring, the water of which, it is said, was similar to that found in a well which once existed in Postern Row, Tower Hill.

Turning to the north-west, we may take a passing notice of Peerless, formerly Perilous, Pool, in the City Road—so called, as Stow explains, from the number of youths who were drowned in it while swimming. In 1790 it was converted into a fine and spacious swimming bath, and now, we think, is called the Metropolitan Baths. This spring once supplied London with water, and some of the ancient pipes through which it was conveyed could still be traced in 1831.

Monkwell Street, Cripplegate, took its name from a well belonging to the monks,\* who had a house, called a hermitage, there, dedicated to St. James. Near to it was a street, called Crowder's Well Alley, now Well Street, which, I presume, derived its name from a well there. Near the Foundling Hospital there was a well, known as Powis, and, according to an advertisement issued in 1754, its water was of a diuretic, gently purging quality, good for the cure of sore legs, inflammation of the eyes, giddiness, and obstinate headaches, as also in rheumatic and paralytic cases. It might be drunk or used externally.

There used to be a timber standard, long since removed, in the Old Bailey, 'delivering fair spring water.'

\* But this is doubtful, since in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries we find the street was Mogwelle or Mugwell Street of which Monkwell Street is supposed to be a corruption of much later date.

Descending southwards, we come to quite a cluster of springs. In Endell Street, at the rear of an iron-monger's workshops, is an ancient bath, said to have been used by Queen Anne. It was fed by a fine spring, said to have medicinal qualities. The walls are inlaid with Dutch tiles, white and blue, evidently of the sixteenth century. It had a lofty groined roof, but the whole is so overbuilt with, and concealed by, workshops as to be inaccessible, and having been filled with timber and rubbish, the spring no longer flows.

Another bath of a similar character, and well preserved, is the old Roman bath in Strand Lane, near Somerset House, which is one of the oldest structures in London, undoubtedly dating from Roman times. It is supposed that it must for centuries have been shut up and unknown, since none of the old historians of London mention it, and that it was only rediscovered in this century. It is situate in a cottage-looking building; a descent of four or five steps leads to a lofty vaulted passage, on the left of which is a doorway leading into a vaulted chamber, about sixteen feet in length, the same in height, and about nine feet wide, in the floor of which is the bath itself. This is about thirteen feet long, six broad, and four feet six inches deep. The walls are formed of layers of bricks of the well-known Roman type. There are the remains of a flight of steps, which once led down into the bath. Immediately opposite to them is a door leading to vaults beyond the bath. This is perpetually supplied from a spring, discharging at the rate of ten tons per day. The water is beautifully clear and extremely cold, and is now used for drinking only. There is another bathroom on the right of the

passage, which is used as a plunging bath, and is said to have been built by the Earl of Essex in the year 1588. The source of the water is unknown; it bubbles up through the sandy bottom, and its flow is pretty even, both in summer and winter. Neither the excavations for the Metropolitan Railway nor those for the Law Courts have affected it.

Near St. Clement's Church in the Strand was the well, so famous in its day, of the same name—once a favourite resort of Londoners. The water was slightly medicinal, and having effected some cures, of course, the name Holywell was applied to it, from which a neighbouring street—now soon to be a thing of the past—took its appellation. The well is mentioned by Fitzstephen, who wrote in the twelfth century; and by Stow in 1598. In 1756 Maitland wrote: 'The well is now covered over, and a pump placed therein.' The exact position of the well is doubtful. It was at one time supposed to be under the Old Dog tavern in Holywell Street, which tavern was purchased and pulled down in the sixties by the Strand Hotel Company. But in the *Standard* of September 3, 1874, it was stated that the well was on the site of the new Law Courts, and was then delivering into the main drainage of London something like 30,000 gallons per diem of exquisitely pure water, which would be utilized for the Law Courts. But St. Clement's or the Holy Well certainly was farther west than the site of that building.

Some other wells might be mentioned, but they are not of sufficient importance to detain us from crossing the Thames, and searching for the records of wells formerly existing in South London.

In 1770 a chalybeate spring was discovered near the Grange Road, and a few years after public gardens were opened, and Bermondsey Spa for a time met with generous patronage. The proprietor of the place spent some £4,000 on decorations, including paintings in a long room called the Picture Gallery. The gardens, and with them the well, were shut up early in this century, their popularity having died out, and all that remains to remind us of them is the name of Spa Road.

St. George's Spa was the name given to a well in St. George's Fields; it had for a time a reputation for the cure of skin diseases, and one Hedger, who kept the Dog and Duck public-house and garden in that locality, first sold the waters about the middle of the last century. The house acquired a very bad reputation in consequence of the persons of bad repute who frequented it. Mr. Barrett, the proprietor of Vauxhall, and a magistrate for the county, became jealous of its large receipts, and, alleging the bad character of the place, had the licence taken away. This closed the establishment; its grounds were turned into gardens, and let out to tenants. One of the first of these was an American quack doctor, who pretended to work miracles. The house itself disappeared, but its sign, carved in stone, and representing a dog holding a duck in his jaws, is embedded in the wall of Bethlehem Hospital. In a French translation of a work on English mineral waters, the translator, calling the spring in question the 'Dog and Duck Spring,' described it as a soup made by stewing a dog and a duck, and then gravely commented on the national fondness of the English for dog and duck broth.



In the Wandsworth Road, close to Vauxhall, there was early in this century a fine spring, called Vauxhall Well. The water was esteemed highly serviceable in many diseases of the eyes, and in the hardest winter was never known to freeze.

In what is now called Lambeth Walk—but which was in the time of William III. known as Three Coney Walk, from a public-house bearing that sign—there was in the beginning of the last century a place of public entertainment called Lambeth Wells, first opened on account of its mineral water, derived from two wells, distinguished as the nearer and the farther well. The water was sold at one penny per quart. The gardens were open from seven in the morning till sunset on three days of the week; on the other three the gardens closed at two o'clock p.m. The admission was three-pence.

The waters retained some degree of reputation till they were eclipsed by those of St. George's Spa above-mentioned. The house then became the resort of disreputable characters, and was about the middle of the last century converted into a Methodist meeting-house. The music gallery was used as a pulpit; but the congregation being greatly disturbed by the roughs of the neighbourhood, the place was again deserted, and the premises converted to various purposes—except the dwelling-house, which became a public-house, known as the Fountain, which still exists. In passing along Lambeth Walk, one of the most densely populated streets of Lambeth, where not a blade of grass is now to be seen, it is difficult to imagine that it once was a rural lane, with gardens to the right and left, and

avenues of fine trees, in commemoration of which one dull, grimy street is still called Walnut Tree Walk.

Streatham Spa was discovered about 1645. Persons employed in weeding in dry weather first drank some of the water, and found it purgative. The owner of the field for some time forbade people to take the water, but before the end of the reign of Charles II. it came into common use. Dr. Johnson was a frequent visitor to the well, and during part of the seventeenth century the reputation of Streatham Spa was at its height. The water was soon after neglected and forgotten, though the well still exists on a farm to the east of the Streatham High Road, where it is sold at one penny the glass, or sixpence per gallon, and whence it is sent as far as Buenos Ayres.

The Sydenham Wells were known as early as 1695; they were near a spot once occupied by the Fox and Hounds in Wells Lane, Sydenham Common, on the south side of the hill which separates Sydenham from Dulwich, on whose north side were the Dulwich Wells or Beulah Spa. This latter is in the county of Surrey, the former in that of Kent. The water of the Sydenham wells was saline, similar to that of Epsom and Beulah Spa; the two, the Sydenham and the Dulwich springs, being on two sides of the same hill, were supposed to have one common source. The former were at first much resorted to for their supposed medicinal virtues; but other and more powerful waters being discovered in other parts of England, their popularity waned, though the Wells House continued for a time to be a place of popular resort. Years ago the

little old cottage and garden where the wells were situate belonged to two elderly women named Evans, who, on Professor Martyn (whose description of the wells appeared in the *Phil. Trans.*, vol. i., part ii., p. 835) asking them how it was they had not been bought out for building, as the spot was surrounded by modern mansions and good houses, replied that they kept possession of the little property, as it would be beneficial to their deceased brother's children.

We referred to the Beulah Spa; it was known also as the Dulwich Wells as early as 1678, and was situate near the Green Man, 'a house of good entertainment.' But it appears to have been lost sight of, and not to have been rediscovered till 1739, when Mr. Cox, then the landlord of the Green Man, was desirous to dig a well for the service of his house. But having dug to a depth of 60 feet, and no water appearing, the opening was covered up for the winter. In the following spring it was reopened, and found to have 25 feet of water in it, of a sulphurous smell and taste; its properties were purgative and diuretic. Mr. Cox began selling the water in London, crying it about the streets, and also supplying St. Bartholomew's Hospital with large quantities of it. And the water was then held in such high repute that its proprietor was induced to accommodate the many persons who came to drink the water by building a handsome room for dancing and other entertainment. In medical puffs the water was asserted to cure almost every disease under the sun, and people who suffered, and who are ever ready to believe in advertisements, came and drank, and danced, if well enough for that. According to a 'Guide to the Beulah Spa,' dated 1834,

‘the Spa lies embosomed in a wood of oaks, open to the south-west, whose dense foliage shelters and protects it, and is now the sole remaining vestige of the former haunts of the gipsies.’ Norwood was always a favourite retreat of those wanderers. In extent the grounds of the Spa covered twenty-five acres, and as the ground was hilly, and there was a lake, the guide-writers gave a loose rein to their fancy, and under their poetic pens the scenery became ‘Helvetic.’ At the entrance to the grounds there was a rustic lodge; inside there was an octagon reading-room, and the well itself was in a thatched hut in the form of an Indian wigwam. The water rose to a height of 15 feet, falling amidst a grotto of rocks. Of course there was a band, a platform for dancing, a rosary, and a wilderness. Of all this there is now nothing to remind you, except the hotel and hydropathic establishment known as the Beulah Spa, which stands on a portion of the grounds of the original Spa.\*

Early in the year 1809 an aperient chalybeate spring was discovered near Begging Hall, Norwood. According to analysis and trials the water was ‘beneficial in scrofulous, rheumatic, and bilious complaints; in cases of impaired constitution by long residence in hot climates, or the too free use of spirituous liquors, it has proved more beneficial than any other spa water in this kingdom.’ So said the doctors who were asked to

\* The site of the Green Man was afterwards occupied by Dr. Glennie’s academy, where Byron went to school; and when the academy in its turn disappeared, the spot was granted to one Bew, a man employed at Dulwich College. Bew opened a beer-shop and tea-gardens, which became the present Grove Inn.

report thereon. Yet, in spite of all these recommendations, the Dulwich, Norwood, and Sydenham springs are clean forgotten.

Camberwell is supposed to derive its name from a well once famous in the locality ; but if this be so, no trace of the well remains, unless we assume it to be the well which still rises on Grove Hill. No mineral virtues have ever been ascribed to it, but it appears to have been of some consequence, for in 1782, when the property on which it rises changed hands, the owners of the estate reserved to themselves, their heirs and assigns, in common with the tenant, the free use of it. Allport, in his 'History of Camberwell,' says that the spring which gave its name to Camberwell rose in the grounds of Dr. Lettsom's villa ; the doctor purchased the ninety-nine years' lease of Grove Hill in 1779. If the freehold changed hands in 1782, he must have been the tenant referred to.

Stockwell probably derives its name from the Anglo-Saxon *stoc*, a wood, and 'well,' from two wells in the locality, one of which was situate somewhere about the present Edithna Street, and the other where the water-supply for carts opposite Hammerton's Brewery, Stockwell Green, now stands.

These are the principal wells now or formerly to be found in and about London ; we wish we could set them flowing again ; but, alas ! we possess no magic wand to strike water out of a rock, if rocks could be found in London, nor are we skilled in the manipulation of the divining-rod to discover hidden springs. But though we cannot handle it successfully, it is said there are people who can, and as the divining-rod in the

popular mind is closely connected with springs, we must inquire into the claims set up for it.

The divining-rod is probably derived from the caduceus of Mercury, which was supposed to be possessed of magical virtues. Traces of the belief in a forked hazel or other rod, which had the power to reveal hidden mines and springs, are found on the Continent as early as the eighth century. Various conditions have to be observed in procuring one; it must be taken from a tree whose fruit contains a stone; it must not be more than one year old, and the fork must be shone on both by the morning and the evening sun. The man using it must be of irreproachable character; a half-witted person is likely to be most successful in the use of it. He must have neither money nor iron about him when walking over the ground, and the best time to use it is after a hearty meal. What about digestion? The hazel, apple, willow, elm, and ash are supposed to yield divining-rods, the first being the most powerful. Baron von Reichenbach ascribes the virtue of the rod to magnetism, electricity, heat, and light, acting on the vital forces; whatever the cause, that some persons have at times been endowed with the gift of using the rod to some purpose, independently of their will, seems indisputable. In 1803 Dr. Charles Hutton published Ozanam's 'Mathematical Recreations,' in which he treated the belief in the divining-rod as absurd. The Hon. Lady Milbanke, afterwards Noel, mother of Lady Byron, the wife of the poet, having, while in France, accidentally discovered her power of using the rod, wrote him a long letter on the subject, and at his



particular request went to see him at Woolwich, and discovered in his presence, in a field he had lately purchased, a spring, which field, in consequence of the discovery, he afterwards sold to the college then building near his property at an enhanced price. The rod used was a hazel twig, about 16 inches long. Lady Milbanke repeated the experiment in several parts of the park, and always successfully. Similarly successful searches by other persons are on record. In 1821 a Mr. William Partridge, of Bowbridge, Gloucester, in a long letter addressed to the editor of the *Monthly Magazine*, mentioned several instances of his successfully discovering springs by means of the rod. To come to quite recent times: in April, 1892, Mr. William Stone was reported to have discovered at Arreton, Isle of Wight, where water had in vain been sought for, a spring, affording a plentiful supply. The illustrated papers of the day gave photos of the water-wizard at work, and of the water spouting up from the ground where his hazel-twig had indicated the spring to exist. In the month of September of the same year Mr. Leicester Gataker was employed by a district council in Bedfordshire to find water, but was not successful. The district auditor refused to pass the charge for the experiment, but the Local Government Board, on being appealed to, reversed the auditor's decision, considering that the district council were justified in making the experiment. In September, 1893, a Mr. Mullins, from Wiltshire, made various experiments at Woodhouse Park, Shepherd's Bush, to find water, and indicated two spots where he said water would be found at depths of from 60 to 80 feet,

and at about 50 feet. We have not been able to ascertain that the discovery was actually put to the test. But the belief in the divining-rod is not dead, and a gentleman, dating from Hull, advertised, in October, 1894: 'Water found by the divining-rod. For terms, apply, etc.' We declare ourselves agnostics in the matter.

We cannot quit Wells and Springs without a reference to the ancient and poetic custom of well-worship, no doubt a relic of classical times. The ancients, we know, dedicated springs to certain deities; thus the Hippocrene, a fountain of Bœotia, near Mount Helicon, which first rose to the ground when struck by the feet of the horse Pegasus, was sacred to Apollo and the Muses; so was the Castalian fount on Parnassus. In fact, every spring, every fountain, had its presiding deity or nymph. The same in the Scandinavian mythology: springs and wells were sacred to certain deities. Thus the Norns, or goddesses of Fate, are seated round the fountain of Urd, with whose waters they daily sprinkle the ash-tree Yggdrasil, which supports the universe. Part of the religion of the Druids consisted in the worship of brooks and fountains, to which people resorted at certain seasons. The Saxons, on coming into England, brought these customs with them, and all over England, but especially in the west, where the Druidic worship was most diffused, there are many wells which still have around them the aroma of a poetic cult. Four of these are the wells of St. Winefred, St. Tegla, St. Elian, and St. Dwywnwen; the first is the most celebrated. The early Christians, as is well known, adopted and imitated most of the customs

and practices of those whom they called pagans, *i.e.*, outsiders, and, whereas these latter assigned wells and springs to certain deities and semi-deities, of a more or less noble and poetic character, the Christians assigned the protection of fountains to prosaic and often mythical saints. But these saints were revered by the credulous crowd, who flocked to their wells in the hope of saving their souls by drinking the sanctified water, and curing their bodies by bathing in it, though experience has amply demonstrated that none of these springs had any medicinal virtues. However, the superstitious belief in them was encouraged by the priests, whose subordinates, deacons, subdeacons, readers, acolytes, sacristans, choristers, parish clerks, and even menial assistants at Divine service, were in early times comprehended under the general designation of clerks. In cathedral cities they were usually associated as a fraternity placed under the protection of some particular saint. In London they formed the company of parish clerks, who were in the habit of performing 'mysteries' or 'miracle plays'; and in London, availing themselves of the superstition which had rendered certain wells sacred, as particularly those situate in the district known as Clerkenwell, it was at or near these wells their performances took place, which of course helped to keep up the reputation of the wells themselves. Of course, the worship of springs and fountains in a purely religious sense is to be condemned, but decorating them on certain occasions with wreaths and flowers, as is done in various countries, and as is still practised at Tissington, in Derbyshire, and was, I think, once done in London—I have lost the reference

—is a custom to be commended ; persons endowed with poetic sentiment and a conviction of the benefits derived from water may as legitimately and rationally pay such homage to its sources, as Jacobites may suspend wreaths to the statue of Charles I., and true patriots to that of Lord Beaconsfield.

## XX.

### THE RIVER THAMES FROM GREENWICH TO CHELSEA.

THE Thames is always with us, but what do most people know about it?—That it is a river full of dirt, just good enough to float penny boats, steam-tugs, and barges. It is no longer the silent highway, it is full of the noise of steam-whistles, fog-horns, the clanking of heavy chains, the hissing of engines letting off steam, and the friendly or angry howling of bargemen. It is no longer the highway it was in the days when it was ordered that the lanes and streets leading down to it were to be kept free from all impediments, so that persons going on horseback might experience no difficulty in reaching its banks; when even the powerful Prior of St. John of Jerusalem was called to account for hindering the free ingress and egress of horses and carts through Temple Lane to the waterside (1360), and by an Order in Council all taverns having signs and stairs to the water were suppressed (1633), ‘having regard that loose persons, bankrupts, and such as are otherwise obnoxious, may privately resort thither, and likewise shift away and withdraw themselves from

the justice of the realm.' Now the river, except at the landing-stages of the steamboats, is inaccessible, and most of these landing-stages are so far removed from the great lines of traffic that people resort to them for business purposes only, seldom for pleasure, and even a walk along the Victoria Embankment, that really noble specimen of modern architecture, is spoilt by the ugly outlook on the opposite side, the dirtiness of the water, and the smoke and grit from passing steamboats and tugs. We are told that formerly the Thames was a clear, limpid, translucent stream, full of fish; now this must be taken *cum grano salis*, considering how much refuse from trading and other operations is discharged into the river, in spite of the severe ordinances against the practice. Thus, in 1357, proclamation was made that 'no man should take rubbish, earth, gravel, or dung into the rivers Thames and Fleet . . . for avoiding the filthiness that is increasing in the water and upon the banks of the Thames, to the great abomination and damage of the people.' And in the same year further complaint is made by the King himself that, 'whereas in passing along the water we have beheld dung, and laystalls, and other filth . . . upon the bank, and have also perceived the fumes and other abominable stench arising therefrom . . . we do command you [the Mayor and Sheriffs] that you cause . . . the banks of the said river to be cleansed . . . and this, as you would preserve yourself safe, and would avoid our heavy indignation, you are in nowise to omit.' But these orders seem to have been disregarded, for in 1372 Edward III. had again to remind the Mayor and Sheriffs that 'rushes [which had been used for strewing



the floors], dung, refuse, and other filth . . . have been for a long time past, and are daily thrown into the water of 'Thames, so that the water aforesaid is so greatly obstructed and narrowed, that great ships are not able as of old they were wont any longer to come up to the same city. . . . We do command you . . . that you will cause orders to be given, that such throwing of rushes, dung, refuse, and other filth shall no longer be allowed.' Of course, it was very unpleasant for the King and his courtiers, who then resided at Westminster, when they went in their gilded barges to levy contributions on the rich merchants and traders of the City, to have such fumes and stench come between the wind and their nobility. The punishment for contravening the above orders was, in the language of the day, to 'let him have the prison for his body, and other heavy punishment as well.'

Henry IV. conferred on the Mayor and the Corporation the Conservancy of the Thames, and then things improved, but not much, as we shall see further on. The purity of the river even then was only comparative; there being none but small, light craft floating on it between London Bridge and Westminster, the impurities thrown into the Thames sank down to the bottom, as they were not then kept in a constant state of suspension as they are now, when the water is uninterruptedly lashed and churned up by the wheels and screws of steamboats and tugs drawing heavily and deeply laden barges, the motion of all of which keeps the water in a constant state of turmoil, so that the mud and dirt can never sink down to the bottom. That the river was full of fish cannot be doubted, since the fishing industry of

London was of considerable importance in those days, and led to many ordinances concerning it, and also to much quarrelling, about which we shall have something to say by-and-by.

The Thames is always with the five millions of human beings in London, yet how many of them, do you think, could say whence comes its name, and what is its meaning? And small blame to these ignorant ones! Philologists, etymologists, and antiquaries are still quarrelling among themselves as to the origin of the name. They fill whole columns of literary papers with their surmises and guesses, calling in to their aid Anglo-Saxon, Celtic, Latin, Greek—yea, even Hebrew; the more far-fetched, the more learned it looks. Says one—and this is one of the most plausible suggestions—the name is simply the Greek *potamos*, with its head cut off, the *po* being an obsolete Greek adverb. Then we have no end of shots at Anglo-Saxon and other languages—even Sanskrit is dragged in; it is a plain case of not seeing the wood because of the trees. Word-genealogists must have an ornamental pedigree, bolstered up by a show of learning; hence they reject the plain and obvious etymology which makes ‘Tamesis,’ the old Latin name, a compound of Tames and Isis, which latter is the name it bears from its source to Dorchester, where it receives the Tame or Thame, and henceforth was called ‘Tamesis,’ which modern convenience has abbreviated into Thames.\*

The Thames is not a Pactolus—it does not run over golden sands; but the fabled wealth of that river at its

\* I am aware that this derivation of the name is now disputed, but it is not yet refuted.

bottom was poverty compared with the riches actually carried by the Thames on its surface. For many centuries the treasures of the East and West have, in an unceasing procession of argosies sailing and steaming up that river Thames, been poured into England. London is the great port of England's Continental and Eastern commerce. Southampton may draw some of it away from London, on account of the difficult navigation of the Thames, and the heavy and unavoidable charges for pilotage, but London will always remain, what it has been for centuries, the emporium of the world's commerce; its geographical position secures to it that pre-eminence for ever. The foreigner who wishes to obtain a correct perception of England's marvellous commercial activity and riches should not approach London by rail or any other land conveyance, but should come up the river, and a sight such as the world never saw before will present itself to him. On his way up the river he will have indications that he is approaching a great commercial and maritime centre, by the outward-bound vessels he will encounter; on coming to Gallion's Reach—a very appropriate name—and commencing at the Albert Docks his review of the Docks extending right up to the Tower, the West India, London and St. Katherine's Docks, with many other smaller ones, he will behold forests of masts tapering to the sky—thousands of masts, flying the flags of all maritime States, rising from ships of such size, beauty, and power as were never dreamt of in the days of Rome's greatest glory, or of Spanish supremacy at sea. Then he will see the Dock warehouses, where, on floor above floor, there is, in products of the earth, in spices, drugs,

minerals, and in the handiwork of human skill and ingenuity, more wealth piled up than the ancients ascribed to the realms of Plutus. Compared with the transactions of London commerce and the shipping arrivals and departures in one single day, the dealings of the Romans, Phœnicians, Venetians, and other nations, appear as mere peddling. And how quietly all this is carried on! In some small office in the City of London the cargo of a 4,000-ton steamer, worth hundreds of thousands of pounds, will be transferred to a new owner, and not half a dozen words be lost over it.

But as water attracts noisome insects, so it attracts human vermin; not only loungers, idlers, and loafers, but big and little thieves. The mud-larks, when not gratifying the low tastes of cads, who throw them pennies to see them dip their heads into the black slimy mud of the river at low-water, are busy in pilfering from unprotected wharves and barges whatever is not sufficiently secured; the skates-lurks, or impostors, dressed as sailors, fasten on inquisitive flats, whom they invariably address as 'captain,' and extract coin by the relation of fabulous adventures they have gone through at sea, which they have never seen. The lumpers prowl about docks and boats, to steal whatever comes handy; whilst the toshers confine themselves to stripping the bottoms of ships of the copper that protects their planks, and thus not only commit robbery, but endanger the lives of the mariners. Then there are scuffle-hunters, river pirates, light horsemen, and others, whose particular pursuits we need not specify; they all live by dishonest practices—like deadly fungi, they cling to that noble creation the ship, as bookmaking rogues and betting

idiots cling to that noble animal the horse. But matters are not so bad as they once were; there was a time when captains and mates—yea, revenue officers—were in league with the thieves, and shared the produce of their depredations according to a regular scale of charges.

Of course, it was not always so. Before London was there was the Thames, but it presented a totally different appearance from what it does now. The north bank, from the site of the Tower to that of Westminster, being high, the river was on that side kept in a pretty well-defined course; but the south side being but slightly raised above, and in some places even lower than, the river, at high-water it overflowed all the low-lying lands, forming a lake up to the Surrey hills. The land to the east of the Tower side, and to the west of the Westminster site, being also low, was equally inundated when the tide came up. By-and-by the Romans came, and began embanking the site now called Southwark, and thus kept the river within bounds between the town to the north, which then extended to the Fleet River only, and the southern banks about as far as the present Blackfriars Road, and centuries passed before Lambeth was thus protected; it was, in fact, not till the latter half of this century that this district was saved from inundation. The present writer remembers seeing the Wandsworth Road, in the neighbourhood of Vauxhall, deep under water. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth there were but few houses along the southern bank west of the Blackfriars Road site; in 1720 but few additional houses had been erected in the locality, and it was not till after 1780 that buildings spread over Lambeth and its vicinity. In those early ages the

traveller coming up from Greenwich, a manor owned by Elthruda, the sister of Alfred the Great (871-901), to Blackwall, and thence to the Tower, would have seen nothing but a dreary waste of submerged lands on both sides of the river. The Isle of Dogs, originally called the Isle of Ducks—and no doubt wild fowl did then abound on that congenial spot—was a marsh, overflowed at every tide; population did not spring up in that locality till Edward I. (1272-1307) and Edward III. (1327-1377), attracted by the beauty of Greenwich, occasionally resided there. But centuries passed before the district became covered with houses; up to the last, and the beginning of this, century the chief signs of human occupation and civilization were the gallows which could be seen lining the Middlesex bank of the river, on which pirates used to be hanged in chains. This reach of the Thames need not for the present detain us.

Having just used the word ‘reach,’ we may take this opportunity of mentioning that certain distances of the river are distinguished as ‘reaches’; their names generally indicate the districts they comprise. Greenwich Reach, with which we begin, is followed, Londonwards, by Deptford Reach; this by Limehouse Reach; this by the Lower and Upper Pool, which extend from Shadwell up to London Bridge. Passing through London, we come, north and south of Vauxhall Bridge, to Lambeth Reach, and from that to Battersea Bridge to Chelsea Reach, where our journey ends. When these appellations first came into use it is now impossible to tell; probably the Conservancy Board established them. This Board, as mentioned above, was founded in the reign of



Henry IV.; confirmed by Parliament in 1487, reconstituted in 1857, and endowed with additional powers by Acts passed in 1864, 1866, 1867, 1870, 1878, 1882, and 1885, it consists of twenty-three Conservators, or members: the Lord Mayor, two City Aldermen, four members of the Common Council, the Deputy Master and one other person appointed by the Corporation of the Trinity House, two Conservators appointed by the Lords of the Admiralty, two by the Board of Trade, two by owners of shipping registered in the port of London, one by owners of steamers plying on the Thames, and one by occupiers of docks on the Thames, and four chiefly to represent the owners of property on the upper part of the Thames above Staines. The jurisdiction of the Board extends from Cricklade, in Wiltshire, to Yantlet Creek, in Kent. They take steps to prevent the pollution of the river, regulate the navigation, repair locks and weirs, inspect steamboats, receive money from six water companies getting a supply from the Thames, and register pleasure-boats and steam-launches. We hear so much of the Conservancy Board that we hope the reader will derive some gratification from this account of its constitution.

We now enter a very region of docks, the construction of which was the outcome of the overcrowded state of the Pool with shipping. Assuming our traveller to be coming up the river, the first docks he would come to would be the Victoria and Royal Albert Docks, to the east of Blackwall; at Blackwall he would pass the entrance to the East India Docks, the first docks constructed in London (in 1799), and then the entrances to the West India Docks, stretching right across the

northern part of the Isle of Dogs. These latter docks were built in 1805, and the East and West India Dock Companies were amalgamated in 1838. Passing Greenwich and going up Limehouse Reach, the entrance to the Millwall Docks, occupying the centre of the Isle of Dogs, would be reached, and on the opposite side of the river that to the Surrey Commercial Docks, established in 1807. At the commencement of the Lower Pool are two entrances to the Regent's Canal Dock, and farther on, at Shadwell and Wapping, entrances to the London Docks. And finally the traveller would reach St. Katherine's Docks, opened in 1828, on the site of the ancient St. Katherine's Hospital, which was demolished, besides 1,250 houses. The earth removed in excavating the docks was taken to Millbank, and utilized in filling up the cuts of the Chelsea Waterworks; Eccleston Square and much of the south part of Pimlico are built on this earth from St. Katherine's Docks. To these extensive docks of a public character must be added many smaller ones, belonging to private firms, and used for their own accommodation only. Of the dock buildings there is, in many cases, not much to be seen, but the countless masts of the vessels safely moored in their basins, some of them, indeed, small lakes, and overtopping all the adjacent streets, sufficiently indicate the position and extent of the docks.

We cannot, however, leave the neighbourhood of Greenwich without a few words on the palaces formerly and now standing there. We mentioned before that Edward I. and Edward III. occasionally resided at Greenwich, and it afterwards became a favourite residence with succeeding Kings of England. The manor

had once belonged to the Abbey of St. Peter, at Ghent, but when Henry V. suppressed the foreign priories, he transferred it to the monastery of Sheen. Henry VI. granted it to his uncle, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, who built a tower within the park, now the site of the Royal Observatory; and he also rebuilt the Palace, and called it Placentia, or the Pleazaunce, which was a long, rather low building, with bow-windows to the ground and first floors. After Humphrey's death the whole reverted to the Crown, and Edward IV. took great delight in enlarging and finishing the Palace, and in the fifth year of his reign granted it to his Queen, Elizabeth Woodville. In the reigns of Henry VII. and of subsequent monarchs the Palace was greatly altered in appearance, and also much enlarged, especially by Henry VIII., who made it the scene of high festivity. It was from a tournament held there that Henry VIII. rode away in great rage, and had his Queen, Anne Boleyn, arrested the next day and taken to the Tower, where she was beheaded shortly after. Elizabeth also kept her Court here; it was her natal place. James I. settled Greenwich Palace and park on his Queen, Anne of Denmark, who laid the foundation of a building near the park called the 'House of Delight,' in which the Governor of Greenwich Hospital resided, and which now forms the central building of the Royal Naval School. Charles I. resided much at Greenwich, and employed Inigo Jones in enlarging and embellishing the Palace. During the Commonwealth it was allowed to run to ruin; after his Restoration Charles II. pulled it down and began a new and more magnificent edifice, of which, however, he only lived to see the first wing. The

architect was Webb, the son-in-law of Inigo Jones. Charles II. also enlarged the park, and built the Royal Observatory. The Palace remained unfinished till the time of William and Mary, when it was completed, not as a royal palace, but as a hospital for disabled English seamen and their children, and for the widows and children of such as were killed at sea. It first began to receive disabled seamen in 1737; among the grants made to the hospital were the estates of the Earl of Derwentwater, forfeited for rebellion in 1715. The building, considered one of the finest specimens of classical architecture in this and almost any other country, remained an asylum for seamen till 1869, when Government granted the seamen pensions to be spent wherever they liked, and the building was eventually utilized as a Royal Naval College. Thus, at the commencement of our journey up the river, we start from a hospital for disabled seamen; nearly at the end of it we shall come to an equally noble institution, the Chelsea Hospital for disabled soldiers.

Though in coming up the river we, near the London Docks, silently pass over one of the marvels of modern engineering, we must not here pass it over in silence—the Thames Tunnel. Since this tunnel was constructed similar and even longer ones have been excavated under the sea, but the Thames Tunnel yet remains one of the marvels of modern engineering, as we have called it. To follow and imitate are easy enough, and though the original conception may be surpassed, the credit of the originality of the first projector, and of his courage in undertaking and perseveringly carrying out his scheme, is not impaired thereby. And the building of the Thames

Tunnel was attended by such a series of disasters, due to the hostility of man and of nature, as to confer the greatest honour on its dauntless originator, Mark Isambard Brunel. An attempt to excavate a passage under the Thames near Rotherhithe had indeed been made as early as 1809, but it was only what miners call a driftway, 5 feet high and 2 feet 9 inches wide, with timber supports ; twice, however, the irruption of quick-sands stopped the work, and the time for the operation having nearly expired, and the ground for the Surrey exit having been appropriated by the Commercial Docks, the undertaking had to be abandoned. But Brunel, who, no doubt, was aware of this, was not discouraged. He began his work in 1825 by erecting a brick tower 150 feet in circumference, which, by excavating the inside, was allowed to sink into the earth, additions being made to the top, till it rested on the solid clay. Then the tunnel itself was begun, and, by means of the highly ingenious shield invented by Brunel, progressed in spite of irruptions of water and dangerous loose sand, the falling of earth, financial and other difficulties ; and the tunnel was made and opened to the public in 1843.\*

Let us go back in time and compare the present gigantic dock operations with the traffic once upon the river.

In 1297 the wardens of Queenhythe and the wardens of the dock at Billingsgate forbade any ship or boat to be moored elsewhere than at the said hythe or dock ;

\* There are now three other sub-aqueous passages under the river : the Tower Subway, the Electric Railway Tunnel, and one between Blackwall and Greenwich.

no boats were to be placed or kept at night near the bankside of Southwark, on pain of parties losing their vessels, and having their bodies committed to prison. In 1377, when it was feared that from the enemy who might come to the City damage might ensue to the shipping, it was ordered that every day and night, from noon to noon, four Aldermen should be on board the said shipping, having with them at least 100 men-at-arms, besides archers; which Aldermen, with their people, in case the enemy should come to set fire to the shipping, were to keep them in check, etc. This was an early instance of setting a railway director on the buffer of the engine. But the remedy considered sufficient in those days shows what the amount of shipping must have been.

In 1380 the erection of two towers was thought sufficient for the protection of the shipping. In that year it was proposed to levy a tax of 6d. in the £ of clear rental, to build a stone tower on one side of the Thames, opposite to another like stone tower, which John Phelipott\* had promised and granted that he himself would build on the other side of the river, 60 King's feet in height, and 20 feet wide within the walls of the tower, at his own costs and charges; for which the Mayor and Aldermen tendered their thanks to John Phelipott. It was agreed on the same day that the said towers should be so placed that within an iron chain extended from the one to the other the whole fleet of the English shipping lying on this side of it, as well as the said

\* John Phelipott was Mayor in 1378, and one of the earliest of great financiers. For the protection of English commerce he fitted out fleets at his own expense.



City, would be secure from hostile attacks. The tower on the London side was evidently intended to stand within the hamlet of Ratcliffe, the shipping in those days not being moored beyond that point. But probably the scheme was never carried out, as in the record of the proposal the appointment of the persons who were to receive the tax of 6d. in the £ is run through with a pen, as having been cancelled.

The care taken of the river by our ancestors is shown by various ordinances and regulations. As to the safety of the river, it was ordered in 1311 that to guard the bankside of the Thames there were to be found each night six men of the ward of Dowgate, twelve men of the ward of Vintry, twelve from Queenhythe, and eight from the ward of Castle Baynard. Again, in 1321, it was ordered that two good and strong boats should be provided on the Thames at night, with armed men, on the one side of London Bridge towards the west, and two boats on the other side towards the east, so as to guard the water by night, and watch that no one might enter that part of the City to do mischief. In 1338, when an attack from the French was anticipated, Edward III. commanded the City to be fortified against such hostile attacks towards the water with stone or with board, and piles to be driven across the river, which, from the account rendered in 1339 by the Chamberlain of Guildhall, was done at once, for the account contains the item, 'For moneys paid for the expenses of driving piles in the water of the Thames, and making a certain house, called the "Bretask," near the Tower of London, £110.' This Tower of London was indeed taken especial care of. In 1350 Edward III.

ordered the Sheriffs to issue a public proclamation forbidding all persons, on pain of forfeiture of life and limb, to dare or presume to bathe in the fosses of the Tower, or in the water of Thames opposite the said Tower, by day or by night, on pain of the forfeiture aforesaid. It was, of course, feared that spies might, by bathing around the fortress, try to discover its weak points.

But there were also natural enemies to provide against. We mentioned above that in the early days of London's history the Thames overflowed a great portion of the low-lying lands between the Surrey hills and the northern banks, leaving at low water a large plain of sand, which in the summer would be quickly dried by the sun, and if, before the next tide, a strong east wind came on, the sand would be driven inland, and form heaps, and in time hills of sand. These sand-hills not being carried away by the river, leave was given, in 1413, to various persons, common labourers in boats called lighters, serving for victuals coming to the City, to dig and take sand or gravel for ballast of ships on both sides of the water-course of the Thames, without making any payment for the same, so always that they should do no damage to any walls or embankments of the said water. And this licence was confirmed in 1538 by the Common Council declaring 'that it shall be lawful to every person to dig and carry away sand, gravel, or any rubbish, earth, or anything lying in any shelf or shelves [of sand] within the said river of Thames, and without anything paying for the same.' But the object for which these regulations were made, viz., the conservation of the navigation of the river, was apparently not obtained,

for in 1580 the Mayor and Aldermen complained that the river eastward from London Bridge had become so decayed that ships, which twenty or forty years past might have come up to the pool opposite St. Katherine's, could not pass at low water without danger between London and Greenwich. They attributed this to the interference of Lord Seymour, Lord Admiral of England, who, assuming the jurisdiction to be vested in him, had erected many new weirs in the upper reaches of the Thames, and thus arrested the free flow of its waters to the eastern side of London Bridge. But it was this bridge especially which was the cause of the poor condition of the river, for its many and narrow arches constituted a formidable barrier to the descent of the upper water—an evil which was not remedied till the new bridge was built. In spite of the complaint of the Mayor, as one of the Conservators of the Thames, nothing, it seems, was done, and the number of shelves prejudicial to the navigation constantly increasing, the City, in 1618, granted to Alphonso Ferabosco, Innocent Lanier, and Hugh Lydiard, a licence to cleanse the Thames of flats and shelves, and permission to sell the sand and gravel they dug out, and an allowance of one penny per ton on strangers' goods imported and exported. In the same year the Lords of the Council recommended to the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen a new engine, invented by John Gilbert, gentleman, one of His Majesty's servants, and Anthony Gibson, citizen of London, for the removal of shoals from the river Thames. The Lord Mayor and Aldermen, it seems, were anxious to employ the engine—had not the King himself recommended it!—but the above-

mentioned Lanier put his spoke in that wheel, and manœuvred to keep the engine idle all the summer through, and, in fact, to keep it so for the following six years, for in 1624 the inventors petitioned that the Lord Mayor and Aldermen should be ordered to employ the engine; but this appears to have been unsuccessful, for in 1629 they presented another petition to the same purpose. In 1632 and 1635 the King, Charles I., again recommended to the City the employment of the engine, but the subsequent political troubles prevented this, and a lawsuit in 1661 was the result; but I cannot discover in whose favour it was decided, if the case was actually tried.

There were other troubles on the river in those days. From an ordinance issued in 1417 it appears that certain people, 'more consulting their private profit and advantage than the common good,' held certain wharves and stairs on the banks of the river, and contrary to ancient custom charged persons, who formerly had there fetched water and washed their clothes, some one half-penny, and others one penny by the quarter; wherefore the Mayor and Aldermen ordered that thenceforth no such charge should again be made, nor anyone be hindered or molested on fetching and taking water, or in beating and washing their clothes, on pain of imprisonment or fine.

Fishing in the river seems to have led to endless disputes. The Thames was once famous for fish; says Harrison, in 1586: 'What should I speak of the fat and sweet salmon daily taken in this stream, and in such plenty, as no river in Europe is able to exceed it?' But certain fishermen would use illegal nets. In 1320

one John de Pelham, fishmonger, of Woolwich, and John Godgrom, 'trinker,' of Plumstead, were charged with using nets, called kidels, to the destruction of small fish and salmon. The kidels were ordered to be burnt. Of 'trinkers' we shall have more to say presently. Nets used in the Thames were to have meshes two inches wide; in 1343 a number of nets were seized in the river to the west of London Bridge, having meshes so small that fishes of the thickness of an inch could not pass through them. These, according to the custom in such cases, were ordered to be burnt. Some other sort of small-meshed nets, 'in distress of small fish,' were called 'smeltnets,' and others 'burrokes.' Men were taken up in 1385 and 1386 for using such, and the nets burnt. The use of these illegal nets was so prevalent that in 1388 it was found necessary to issue fresh orders against it: no man was to fish in the Thames with any nets but those of the assize at Guildhall; and no one was to fish near to the wharves in London between the Temple Bridge—the word 'bridge' was then used in the sense of a landing pier or jetty—and the Tower within a distance of twenty fathoms, nor with a 'pursnet,' the same as the 'codnet,' which has a cod or purse containing a stone for sinking the net. Any contravention of these regulations involved the loss of the net.

A few lines above we mentioned 'trinkers.' They were fishermen who used trinks or treinekes, nets of the width (in the meshes) of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches, which they attached to poles or anchors. The use of these nets was strongly objected to by the City authorities, since they destroyed the small fry, especially as so large a quantity was taken in them that it was used for feeding

swine ; they, moreover, interfered with navigation, so that ships, which at first came up to St. Katherine's, could, in consequence of these nets laid in the river, not come up to Blackwall. Tiltboats and wherries were scarcely able to pass from London to Greenwich at low water. Such nets had indeed been allowed, provided they were drawn by hand, and not fastened to posts, boats, or anchors, but the fishermen were constantly infringing this regulation, in which they were encouraged by the Admiralty, between whom and the Mayor, as Conservator of the Thames, great jealousy existed, the former claiming certain rights, repudiated by the Conservancy. Thus when certain fishermen fished for salmon at Chelsea, by warrant of the Lord High Admiral, the Mayor objected, and seized the nets. The Admiral, however, took their part, and insisted on the Conservators instructing their water-bailiff not to molest them any more. The trinkermen also, supported by the Admiralty, petitioned the Conservators against being interfered with ; a good deal of paper and ink and sealing-wax was wasted in correspondence over this quarrel between the two public departments without any useful result.

But it is time we should proceed up the river. When we digressed into legal matters, we had just passed St. Katherine's Docks, where once stood the hospital and monastery of that name. We have treated of this elsewhere (see Religious Houses) ; we therefore pass on, and see before us the Tower of London. This building and its history have formed the subjects of countless volumes, and are therefore well known, and for this reason, and because it would be impossible to



give even a compressed account of either within the compass of these pages, we must refer the reader to those larger works. But as far as our traveller up the river is concerned, we may observe that of the three entrances to the Tower once opening on the Thames, none remains. The chief of these entrances, Traitors' Gate, ominous in its name and terrible in its history, is still indicated by the partly walled-up opening in the centre of the quay in front of the fortress. The Iron Gate, a great and strong gate, but not usually opened, as Stow says, and the Water Gate, which seems to have been a little east to Traitors' Gate, for boats and small vessels, have entirely disappeared. The Tower Bridge, which here spans the river, is of such modern construction, and is so fully described in the periodical literature of the day, by letterpress and pictorial illustrations, as to render its description unnecessary, but we may observe that the idea of the construction of such a bridge on this spot is of ancient date. It was proposed in 1824 to apply to Parliament for power to erect a patent wrought-iron bar bridge of suspension over the Thames for carriages from below the Tower to the opposite shore, such bridge to be of sufficient height to admit ships to pass under it at all times. It took seventy years to accomplish the object.

The Tower of London was built by William the Conqueror to control the citizens of London; the large building we now come to controls their cash in no inconsiderable degree. It is the Custom House. The first building for the purpose it serves was erected in 1385 by John Churchman, or Chircheman, as the name was then spelt, though customs continued to be collected

at different landing wharves. This caused considerable loss to the revenue, wherefore in the first year of Queen Elizabeth an Act was passed, appointing three places, of which Churchman's was one, where ships might be laden and unladen. A new and enlarged building was erected on the spot, and it continued to be the chief seat of custom-collecting till it was wholly destroyed by the Great Fire in 1666. A small print of it as it appeared in 1663 is in the Crace Collection, and it is also distinctly shown in Wyngrerde's pictorial map of London of 1543. A new Custom House was erected on the same spot by Sir Christopher Wren, which was burnt down in 1718; it was replaced by another, which underwent the same fate, being destroyed by fire in 1814. A much larger and more splendid Custom House was erected in 1818, but the architect, Mr. David Laing, having raised it on defective piling, in consequence of which the central portion of the building was threatened with destruction, the centre, which contained the Long Room, had to be taken down, and was rebuilt, as it now appears, by Sir Robert Smirke.

Billingsgate, which is now before us, was made in the first year of Queen Elizabeth's reign an open place for the landing of any fish, corn, salt, stores, victuals, and fruit (grocery goods excepted); in 1699 it was declared the free and open mart for all kinds of fish. But Billingsgate, or Belin's Gate, as it was originally called, was of much more ancient date than the reign of Elizabeth. It was a port for receiving dues on the part of the King as early as 975, when Ethelred was King; and Canute during his reign (1017-1035) enacted rates or customs, which were to be paid on goods landed

at Belin's Gate, though Queenhythe, more to the west, and to which we shall presently come, was then the principal landing-place, but had to cede its prerogative to Billingsgate when the first stone bridge was built, which rendered access to Queenhythe very difficult.

‘ But unto us [Billingsgate] hath a spell beyond  
Her name in story, and her long array  
Of mighty ’

words for philologists and root-grubbers hath a spell which these worthies find it very difficult to spell. Billingsgate language is so forcible, and sometimes obscure, that even Johnson was flummuxed by it. The Scotch professor who tackled a Glasgow fishwoman did better than the learned Doctor. He called her a prism, a cone, a spheroid, a parallelopipedon, and similar names, till the woman turned terror-stricken to a neighbour and said: ‘ How the gentleman do swear !’ Even in our day Billingsgate has not lost its linguistic attractions, for only recently a widow lady, on being asked why she paid such frequent visits to the locality, replied: ‘ I go to ’ear the langwidge ; it do so remind me of my poor dear ’usbing.’

We have now reached London Bridge, but it is not the present bridge we mentally look at, but the bridges that preceded it. Before there was any bridge on this spot there was a ferry. The legend of John Overs, the ferryman, and of his daughter Mary, who is reported to have built the first wooden bridge and the church, is too well known to need repetition here, but the church of St. Mary Overy is no proof of its truth ; the name most probably is a contraction of ‘ over the rye,’ over

the water, because people there passed over the rye from Surrey into Middlesex. It is also reported that the monks of St. Mary's monastery, on Bankside, built the first wooden bridge, and kept it in repair. But this is much doubted by antiquaries, and it is, on the other hand, highly probable that such a bridge existed here as early as the Roman occupation. The Watling Street, which came down the Edgware Road, was diverted from its southern direction into one to the east, till it joined the Watling Street in the City, whence it passed over into Surrey, forming part of the old Roman military road into Kent. Coins reaching from the Republican period to that of Honorius in a continuous series have been found in the bed of the river at the spot where the bridge is supposed to have crossed, near Botolph Stairs, which would seem to prove that the bridge must have existed at a very early time of the Roman occupation. The coins may have been accidentally dropped, or cast into the stream as an offering to the river deity. Stow and other writers mention several circumstances which, if they are to be relied on, prove that a bridge existed on the spot long before the stone bridge was built between 1176 and 1209. Dion Cassius (b. *circa* 155), in recording the invasion of Britain by the Emperor Claudius in the year 44, says that the Britons, retreating before the invading Romans, were followed by the latter, who, coming to a bridge higher up the river Thames, crossed it, and fell upon the former, but pursuing them incautiously, were themselves entangled in the marshes, and lost a number of men. William of Malmesbury, in mentioning the attack on the City by Sweyne, King of Denmark, in 994,

says that Sweyne's fleet ran foul of the bridge; and in speaking of a second siege, he again refers to the bridge. Among the statutes of King Ethelred II., naming tolls to be paid at Bylynsgate, the passage occurs: 'Whoever shall come to the Bridge in a boat in which there are fish, shall pay one halfpenny for toll.' Snorro Sturlusonius, an Icelandic historian, who wrote in the thirteenth century, says: 'There was at that time (1008) a bridge erected over the river between the City and Southwark, so wide that if two carriages met they could pass each other. At the sides of the bridge were ramparts and castles, defended at the top by pent-house bulwarks and turrets.' In the year above mentioned the Danes were in possession of both the City and the bridge, and had also a strong outwork in Southwark; this, as well as the bridge, had been unsuccessfully attacked by Ethelred II. and his then ally, Olaf, the Norwegian Prince, when it was determined that a simultaneous attack by land and by water should be made, for which purpose Olaf erected great scaffolds upon the ships for the play of their engines. But on their attacking the bridge the united forces were driven back by a shower of stones and other missiles, which shattered their helmets and shields, and seriously damaged their ships. Many of them therefore retired, but Olaf and his Norsemen rowed their ships close up to the bridge, made them fast to the piles with ropes and cables, with which they strained them, and the tide seconding their efforts, the piles gradually yielded, so that the whole bridge gave way, and involved in its fall the ruin of many. The bridge was soon after rebuilt, so that when in 1016 the Danes, under the command

of Canute, were arrested by it in their advance up the river, Canute ordered a trench to be dug from Rotherhithe to Chelsea Reach, and thus dragged his ships to the west side of the bridge. In 1091 it was swept away by a tempest, but was restored under Rufus. In 1136 it suffered greatly from fire; it was repaired, but, it appears, not substantially enough, for in 1163 it had not only again to be repaired, but 'new made' of timber, which was done under the superintendence of Peter of Colechurch, chaplain of St. Mary Colechurch, in the Poultry, who, seeing the insufficiency of a wooden bridge, in 1176 began the erection of the stone bridge, which lasted to nearly our own day. It was a little below the present bridge, in continuation of Gracechurch Street, and consisted of twenty arches, including the drawbridge for the passage of large boats. There was a gatehouse at each end, and a chapel and crypt, dedicated to St. Thomas of Canterbury, in the centre. The bridge was built on piles, driven as closely as possible together; on their tops were laid long planks, 10 inches thick, strongly bolted, and on them were laid the bases of the piers, the lowermost stones of which were bedded in pitch to prevent the water from damaging the work. Round all were the piles, which are called the sterlings, designed for the preservation of the foundation piles. These contracted the space between the piers so greatly as to occasion at the retreat of every tide a fall of 5 feet, or a number of temporary cataracts, which rendered the navigation of the river very dangerous—thousands of lives were lost through them. The size of some of the piers may be inferred from the size of the chapel above mentioned; it was 65 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 40 feet



high. The roof was supported by fourteen clustered columns, and there were eight windows looking east. In the crypt was the grave and monument of the architect himself. It was beautifully paved with black and white marble, and it and the chapel were accessible from the bridge and from the river by a winding staircase. The number of piers was nineteen, of unequal dimensions; of the whole waterway, about 900 feet, the piers occupied 700 feet. The original width of the bridge was 20 feet. At what period houses were first built on it is uncertain; as in 1395 a tournament was held on it, they probably were not erected till the fifteenth century. On demolishing the old bridge in 1824 it was found that the outer casing of the piers was composed of ashlar masonry, the stones being fastened together with iron cramps, run with lead, while the joints and beds were cemented with a composition of pitch and resin. The insides of the piers consisted of loose stones, filled in with lime, evidently used in a liquid state, and so compact was the mass of material that it was broken up with much difficulty. The foundation appeared to have been laid at low water; the piles were chiefly of elm, driven down about 6 or 7 feet. They, as well as the cross-planks, were perfectly sound after the lapse of upwards of six centuries and a half, showing practically how well wood is preserved when placed under water and not exposed to the air. It is doubtful in what manner the foundations were laid; there is a tradition that the river was diverted by a trench on the Southwark side, but had the builders been thus enabled to work in the dry, the bridge would not have taken thirty-three years for its erection. It is

probable that the sterlings acted as cofferdams, which the architects did not know how to clear of water, and did not care to remove after they had performed their office.

About 1436 two arches of the south end fell down with the bridge gate ; the ruins were allowed to remain under water for more than three centuries before attempts were made to remove them, and they were then found to be as impenetrable as solid rock. The houses on the bridge, as population and consequently traffic increased, became a nuisance and an inconvenience, and were removed in 1758 ; the two centre arches were at the same time united into one by removing one of the piers.

Many incidents connected with the history of England crowd around the bridge, but we must confine ourselves to such as are connected with the structure itself only. The towers which defended the entrances north and south to the bridge used to be, as Pennant says, the shambles of human flesh, and covered with the heads or quarters of unfortunate partisans. Even so late as the year 1598 Hentzner, the German traveller, counted on it above thirty heads. The last head exhibited on the bridge was that of Vennor, the Fifth Monarchy zealot, in the reign of Charles II. Old maps and views of London Bridge always display these gruesome decorations ; Wyngrerde's panoramic view of the bridge bristles with them.

In 1508 mills were erected on the river, near London Bridge, to grind corn for the better supply of the City. In consequence of the difficulty of grinding the corn for the poor, the Commonalty petitioned Queen Elizabeth

to be permitted to erect four other mills for that purpose near the bridge ; the Trinity House were instructed to inquire whether this would be detrimental to the river. They reported favourably to the scheme in May, 1588. But there was opposition to it on the part of certain persons, and the Lord Mayor had to make repeated applications to Government in 1591 for leave to proceed with the work which had been begun, and it appears it was not till after another year they were allowed to go on with it. Probably the opposition arose from Peter Morice, a Dutchman, who, in 1580, had proposed to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen his scheme for raising Thames water by a machine of his own invention, high enough to supply the upper parts of the City, and throw a jet of water over the steeple of St. Magnus Church. Thereupon the City granted him a lease for 500 years of the Thames water, and the places where the mills stood, and one of the arches of old London Bridge, at 10s. yearly. Two years afterwards they granted him another arch on the same terms. He received large grants from the City to help him to complete his system of hydraulic mechanism. The works continued in the family till 1701, when they were sold for £36,000 to Richard Soames, and afterwards became the property of a company. In June, 1767, the fifth arch was granted for the use of the company. By Act of Parliament, on July 26, 1822, the Acts relating to the company were repealed ; this latter was to be paid £10,000, and their works removed by, or at the expense of, the New River Company. Morice's water-wheel was originally moved only by the tide flowing through the first arch ; but for the exten-

sion of the works other arches were, as we have seen, assigned to the inventor. Later on similar works, but on a smaller scale, were erected at the Southwark end of the bridge.

One of the most curious buildings on the bridge was Nonsuch House ; it was entirely of wood, constructed in and brought over from Holland, and set up here without the assistance of mortar or iron, only wooden pegs being used to hold it together. It extended across the bridge by means of an archway, was elaborately carved on its principal front, four stories high, towards Southwark, and on its east and west gables, which protruded a considerable way beyond the line of the bridge, while the square towers at each of its four corners were crowned by short domes, or Kremlin spires, and their gilded vanes rose high above all the surrounding buildings. Looked at from a distance, concerning which more presently, the bridge was a grand object, but in itself the street it formed was not attractive. Pennant says : ‘ I well remember the street on London Bridge [*circa* 1750] —narrow, darksome, and dangerous to passengers from the multitude of carriages ; frequent arches of strong timbers crossed the street from the tops of the houses to keep them together and from falling into the river. Nothing but use could preserve the rest of the inmates, who soon grew deaf to the noise of the falling waters, the clamors of the watermen, and the frequent shrieks of drowning wretches.’ In Kay’s ‘ Proverbs ’ (1737) we read : ‘ London Bridge was made for wise men to go over and fools to go under.’ The houses were chiefly tenanted by haberdashers, but the bridge was also one of the principal literary emporia of London, and there

were grocers, salters, scriveners, and others living on the bridge. There was also a tavern, the Bear, at the bridge foot at the Southwark end, which Thomas Drynkewater, taverner of London (a strange name for a taverner!), leased in 1319 to one James Beauflur. One of the most famous inhabitants of the bridge was Hans Holbein. Walpole, passing over the bridge, was caught in a shower and stepped into a goldsmith's shop for shelter, where he found a picture of Holbein, for which he offered £100, which offer was accepted, but the goldsmith asked to be allowed to keep it for a few days to show it to some friends. Immediately after, the Great Fire occurred, and the picture was destroyed. Holbein's house, therefore, must have been near the north end of the bridge, as that only was burnt, the fire having stopped at the first 'vacancy' on the bridge.

We just now said that, looked at from a distance, the bridge was a grand object. And so undoubtedly it was—not only grand, but unique, an unparalleled architectural marvel. Its great length, its massive and lofty stone towers, the picturesque wooden houses projecting over the piers, the drawbridge, the balustraded openings, the quaint stone houses, some decorated in the most fantastic manner with carvings, turrets, and projecting gables, the splendid chapel, rising like a Venetian structure from the water—all these must have rendered old London Bridge one of the most extraordinary, and one of the most picturesque objects ever seen. And what a view must have been obtainable from any of the upper windows, east or west, of the houses on the bridge—especially during the fifteenth and early in the sixteenth century, before the destruction of the religious houses;

looking east, the spectator would, to the right, see St. Olave's Church, a long stretch of gardens and orchards, with many picturesque farmhouses dotted here and there, and lastly the grand abbey of Bermondsey. But to the left the aspect must have been historically and architecturally still more interesting and attractive. There were, taking the buildings immediately on the river only, Billingsgate, the Custom House, the Tower, St. Katherine's Church and monastery, and in the far distance, at Greenwich, the palace of Placentia, besides the general view of eastern London, with the innumerable spires of abbeys and churches, and the towers of London Wall, and the palaces of nobles then inhabiting that region. But looking to the west, the aspect was still more glorious. Looking to the right, there were, close to the water, Fishmongers' Hall, the landing-stages of Coldharbour, the Steelyard, the stately Baynard's Castle, behind which rose in majestic grandeur old St. Paul's Cathedral, with its lofty spire, whilst behind that, in the distance, St. John's Hospital rose to view; then, again, on the Thames could be seen the monastery of the Black Friars, and opposite to it, across the river Fleet, the palace of Bridewell, and adjoining it the abbey of the Grey Friars; beyond that the Temple, Somerset Place, the palace of Savoy, Durham House, St. Mary's Hospital, the palace of Whitehall, Westminster Abbey, Westminster Hall, and St. Stephen's Chapel. Looking to the left, the spectator would have immediately below him the grand church of St. Mary Overy, Winchester House and Rochester House, the priory of St. Mary Overy, the Bridge House, whence the view would extend, without encountering any buildings,



over fields and gardens and the river as far as the towers of Lambeth Palace. To the political economist the present aspect of London from the bridge may be more interesting; but the lover of the picturesque must always prefer the ancient view. Well might Howell, in his 'Londinopolis' (1657), write:

'When Neptune from his billows London spied—

\*                \*                \*                \*                \*

When he beheld a mighty bridge give law  
Unto his surges, and their fury awe—

\*                \*                \*                \*                \*

When he such massy walls, such tow'rs did eye,  
Such posts, such irons upon his back to lie,  
When such vast arches he observed, that might  
Nineteen Rialtos make for depth and height,

\*                \*                \*                \*                \*

He shook his trident, and, astonished, said,  
"Let the whole earth now all her wonders count,  
This bridge of wonders is the paramount."

We have lingered long on the bridge, and yet have left much unexplored; but as we are restricted to outlines, we must leave it, and descend to the river. In earlier days it was more than it is now the silent highway, the chief means of communication between Whitehall and the Tower, between the courtiers of the west and the citizens of the east, in every way preferable to the streets, which were in a deplorable state as to paving, lighting, and security of person and property. The many noblemen and the rich monastic fraternities, whose palaces and abbeys and priories overlooked the river and the pleasant meadows and gardens on the opposite side, all these had their barges and boats, in which they travelled from one part of the town to the

other, or enjoyed the cool breezes of the evening. As the palace-owners of Venice had and have their gondolas, with a staff of gondoliers attached thereto, so the owners of the mansions on the Thames had their watermen to manage their barges and wherries. The Sovereign might frequently be encountered on the river in his gilded and tapestried barge. The Admiralty, the Lord Mayor, and some of the wealthier City Companies also had their state barges, which were in constant use, for the river then presented amenities it has long since lost. The pleasant meadows and orchards of the Surrey side are now covered with ugly factories, dismal and desolate and grimy wharves; and for the not unmusical chorus of the watermen, ‘Heave and how, rumbelow!’ we have the clanking of the chains of hoisting apparatus, and the shrill whistle of the steam-tug. On the northern side the palaces are turned into wharves and warehouses; all beauty, all poetry, all historical memorials are gone; the ugliness of the river’s banks from London Bridge to Blackfriars on the north, and from London Bridge to Westminster Bridge on the south, is scarcely redeemed by the Victoria Embankment, which has yet to acquire the prerogative and charm that Time only can confer. The gay pageantry of the river is gone; the great City barge, the *Maria Wood*, is let out to pleasure parties, so is the Goldsmiths’ barge. Nothing cheerful now enlivens the dreary waste of waters; the asthmatic music that occasionally floats over it as an excursion steamer takes people to Kew or Hampton Court is only fitted to inspire melancholy thoughts. In those days there were also public boats on the river, with bright awnings, for picnic parties. In the days of William III. was moored

opposite Somerset House a floating coffee-house, called the Folly. It resembled one of the modern house-boats, and was divided into a number of rooms, with a platform and balustrade on the top, and turrets at the corners. It was originally designed as a musical summer-house, and at first resorted to by persons of quality. Queen Mary, with some of her courtiers, once paid it a visit; but it sank into a receptacle for companies of loose and disorderly people, for purposes of drinking and promiscuous dancing, till at length, becoming too scandalous to be kept open, it was closed, suffered to go to decay, and finally broken up for firewood. According to the facetious Tom Brown, who speaks of it as a 'whimsical piece of architecture,' its character was at all times equivocal, and in the end degenerated into 'a confused scene of folly, madness, and debauchery.' But there was nothing whimsical about the boat; it was, as we intimated above, something like a modern house-boat, and formed a picturesque object in the land- or, rather, water-scape. The neighbourhood of the spot where it was anchored has, however, seen a more remarkable boat, namely, the Chinese junk, which was moored just above Waterloo Bridge. It had crossed the Indian Ocean, sailed round the Cape of Good Hope and up the Atlantic to our river, small as it was, without disaster or even accident; but then there were six English sailors on board who attended to the navigation of the ship. It was a real bit of China, and the long descriptions of it which appeared in the periodicals of the day read like passages taken from fairy tales. However, bringing the vessel over here no doubt proved a good spec: all London went to see it, the present

writer included. After the Chinese junk, three other boats of very different characters occupied nearly the same spot. First, the *Royalist*, an old 16-gun frigate, which, having done good service in the Royal Navy, was stationed off Norfolk Street as a floating police-station. In 1873 or 1874 this was removed to Greenwich. The *Royalist* was succeeded by the *Rainbow*, not as a police-boat, but as the headquarters of the London Brigade of the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers; and this was afterwards replaced by the *Frolic*, originally built for the navy, as a twin-screw gun-vessel of 610 tons, and 900 horse-power. Her armament consisted of one 90 cwt. M.L.R., three 64-pounder M.L.R., and two 20-pounder B.L.R. Her length was 155 feet, with 25 feet beam. She was built at Chatham, launched in 1872, and cost £13,000. She added very much to the picturesqueness of the Thames, for her outlines were very elegant, and she was always kept in the most beautiful trim. But she had to go. In September, 1892, they began dismantling her; in a week her masts, spars, and all that gives a ship the appearance of being a thing alive, a creation combining grace with strength, were all taken out of her, and nothing was left of her but the hull and the davits above board. She was then towed down the river and taken to Sheerness, there to be refitted for service as a coastguard ship in the Burnham River, Essex, famous for its oysters.

But we have imperceptibly slipped into the present, whilst we have yet much to say concerning the past. We must retrace our steps. William Fitzstephen, who wrote in the reign of Henry II. (1154-1189), in describing the sports of old London, says: 'In the Easter

holidays they [the young citizens] play at a game resembling a naval engagement. A target is firmly fastened to the trunk of a tree, which is fixed in the middle of the river; and in the prow of a boat, driven along by oars and the current, stands a young man, who is to strike the target with his lance; if, in hitting it, he break his lance and keep his position unmoved, he gains the point, but if his lance be not shivered by the blow, he is tumbled into the river, and his boat passes by, driven along by its own motion. Two boats, however, are placed there, one on each side of the target, and in them a number of young men to take up the striker when he first emerges from the stream. On the bridge, and in balconies on the banks of the river, stand the spectators, well disposed to laugh.' Stow relates: 'I have seen also in the summer season, upon the river Thames, some rowed in wherries, with staves in their hands, flat at the fore-end, running one against another, and for the most part one or both of them were overthrown and well ducked. This was called a water tournament.' But gradually people who indulged in these sports discovered that they made more sport for the spectators than for themselves, and so they eventually ceased altogether. Then public gardens came into fashion; there were several of them in the lower reaches of the river, but as we are now west of London Bridge we will pay a visit to Cuper's Garden, vulgarly called Cupid's Garden, the site of which is now occupied by the Waterloo Road. About the year 1680 the ground on which Cuper's Garden was afterwards formed was a long narrow field, surrounded by water-courses, and intersected by a path up the centre

with a few lonely buildings on one side. In 1682, Boyder Cuper, who had been a gardener in the Arundel family, when the latter removed from Arundel House in the Strand, begged some of the sculpture not considered worth removing, and set it up in the above ground, which he had hired and turned into a public garden for music, dancing, fireworks, and the usual attractions of gardens like Sadler's Wells, Marylebone, and others. Cuper was succeeded in the management of the garden by one Evans, who had kept the Hercules Pillars in Fleet Street, and afterwards his widow carried on the gardens; but they had, by 1752, become so notoriously dissolute, that they were ordered to be closed. In 1754 Mrs. Evans advertised that as, through the malicious misrepresentations of ill-meaning persons, she was denied her former liberty of opening the gardens, she had opened the tavern which stood close to the water's edge, and not raised much above it. Its sign was the Feathers; it was a rustic house, offering, to judge by the outside, but scanty accommodation within. The present Feathers public-house, which stands rather farther back from the river than the original tavern, is entered from the Waterloo Road, at a considerable elevation above the ground. The gardens were not licensed after 1752, but in 1755 they were opened by subscription, probably fictitious, for fifteen private evening concerts and fireworks. In 1759 the gardens and tavern were finally closed for good, and in 1786 the ground was let to Messrs. Mark and Henry Beaufoy at an annual rent of about £1,200, for the erection of their manufactory of British wines, which was an establishment on a grand scale. 'On first entering the yard,'



says Pennant, 'two vessels rise before you covered at the top with a thatched dome, and between them is a circular turret, containing a winding staircase, which brings you to their summits, which are above 24 feet in diameter. One of these is full of sweet wine, and contains 58,109 gallons, or 1,815 barrels. Its companion is full of vinegar, to the amount of 56,799 gallons, or 1,774 barrels. The famous Heidelberg tun yields to even the latter by the quantity of 40 barrels. Beside these there is an avenue of smaller vessels, which hold from 32,500 to 16,974 gallons each.' The above edifice stood on the site of the oblong square pond which had adorned the gardens. But the erection of Waterloo Bridge necessitated the removal of these works, which removal to South Lambeth, as described elsewhere, took place in 1814. The value of Messrs. Beaufoy's short lease, and the loss occasioned by the removal of their old and the establishment of new works, was estimated by a jury at £36,000.

There being before the middle of the last century no other bridge between London and Putney Bridges, the river at high water looked something like a lake; and as the narrowness of the arches of old London Bridge caused the current to be more slow than it is now, with the wide arches of the new bridge, and as they moreover in heavy frosts obstructed the passage of floating ice, the latter was coagulated into solid masses, and, in consequence of the flow of water in the upper reaches being thereby still more impeded, the whole river became frozen from bank to bank when a severe frost lasted for some time. In 1281 the Thames was passable on the ice between Westminster and Lambeth for men and

horses; so again in 1410. In 1434 the Thames was frozen below London Bridge to Gravesend, so that the merchandise which came to the mouth of the Thames was carried to London by land. In 1505 and 1516 the Thames was again completely frozen over, and so again in 1564, when a football match was played on the ice. A sudden thaw set in, and between London Bridge and Westminster no end of damage was done by the flood. In 1608 the ice was again so solid that booths for business and amusement were set up on it, and in 1683-84 whole streets of shops were erected on the ice, a printing-office was opened, and Charles II., who visited the scene with some of his courtiers, had his name and the names of members of his family printed on the ice. Bull-baiting, horse and coach races took place on it; coaches, instead of wherries, carried passengers from Westminster to the City. In 1688-89 a coach-and-six was driven from Westminster almost to London Bridge, and a fair held on the ice, as on former occasions. In 1709 and 1715 similar frosts occurred. In 1739 the Thames floated with rocks and shoals of ice, and when they fixed themselves, represented a snowy field, everywhere rising in masses and hills of ice and snow. There was the usual complete frost fair, but on this occasion the thaw came so fast that many booths, shops, and sheds were carried away by the flood, and some people drowned. In 1768 and 1789, and again in 1811, the Thames was frozen over, and in 1813-14 the last frost fair was held; on February 5 the ice cracked, and floated away with booths, printing-presses, swings, and the people in them. The removal of old London Bridge seems to have put a stop to these

freezing fits of old Father Thames—at any rate, in the lower reaches, though higher up the river still occasionally gets frozen over. The present writer remembers walking over it from Halliford to Shepperton, and seeing a sheep roasted on the ice. This was some time in the fifties.

Terrible as the river must have looked in the winter time, how pleasant it must have been for Londoners in the summer season, when as yet there were no bridges, no hideous, noisy wharves on the Surrey side, no steam-tugs, no penny steamers, no coal and clay barges, no smoke-vomiting potteries! No wonder the river was then the highway of London! Its waters were clear, its northern banks from Whitehall to Baynard's Castle were lined with palaces of the nobility, such as York House, Salisbury House, Durham House, Arundel House, the Savoy, Somerset House; lower down were the monasteries of White and Black Friars, the palace of Bridewell, by whose walls the Fleet, then a noble river, flowed into the Thames. To the sumptuous buildings just named gardens were attached, which embellished the margin of the Thames. Very suitable was the river then for the pageants in which our ancestors delighted, and which kings and queens wisely took care to provide for their loving subjects—for, after unmercifully squeezing them or their purses, it was sound policy to amuse them. When Henry VII. willed his Queen Elizabeth to be crowned, she came from Greenwich by barges freshly furnished with banners and streamers of silk. When Henry VIII. avowed his marriage with Anne Boleyn, she was brought from Greenwich to the Tower, and thence to Westminster for her coronation. The

pageantry exhibited on this occasion was the most gorgeous that the taste of the age could furnish. The Mayor and Aldermen, all in scarlet, such as were knights wearing SS. collars, and the residue great chains, entered their barge at St. Mary's Hill. The barge 'was garnished with many banners and streamers, and had in it shalmes, stage-bushes, and divers other instruments of music, which played continually. Before the Mayor's barge was a foist (pinnace or small boat) full of ordnance, and a great red dragon continually casting wild-fire, and about the said foist stood terrible monstrous wild men, casting fire and making hideous noises. On the right hand of the Mayor's barge was the Bachelors' barge, in which were trumpets and other musical instruments; the decks of the said barge were hung with cloth of gold and silk. On the left hand of the Mayor's barge was another foist, in which was a mount, on which stood a white falcon crowned upon a root of gold, environed with white roses and red, and about the mount sat virgins singing and playing melodiously.' The different City Companies followed in succession, 'every Company having melody in their barge by themselves, and goodly garnished with banners.' At three o'clock the Queen, apparelled in rich cloth of gold, entered her barge, attended by her suite of ladies and noblemen, and was rowed up to the Tower, where the King received her with a loving countenance [fancy the debauched brute looking 'loving'!] and kissed her. On the following day she passed, amidst even greater splendour, through London to Westminster, and was crowned on the following day, to be, less than three years after, again taken

in a boat by fierce and rough men to the Tower as a prisoner, pre-condemned to perish on the scaffold on Tower Hill.

Return we to the Thames. As every one of the palaces and mansions studding the north bank of the river had its landing-place, and its private retinue of barges and wherries, the river was always full of life, for there was not only the ordinary traffic for business or pleasure on it, but special occasions constantly arose to increase that traffic. Thus, when the Archbishop of York, having left the widow of Edward IV. in the sanctuary of Westminster, sitting 'alone below on the rushes, all desolate and dismayed,' looked out of his window at York Place, he saw 'the river full of boats of the Duke of Gloucester his servants, watching that no person should go to sanctuary, nor none should pass unsearched.' The great Cardinal himself might be seen hurrying to and fro on the Thames between Whitehall and Blackfriars, where the question of the divorce of Henry VIII. and the unfortunate Katherine was being discussed, and the King, getting impatient at the long delay, made it very unpleasant for Wolsey. One day, returning home to Whitehall from one of these conferences with the King, he said to the Bishop of Carlisle, who was with him in his barge, and complained of the heat: 'Yea, if you had been as well chafed as I have been within this hour, you would say it were very hot.'

But though the river was at times

'The pleasant place of all festivity,  
The revel of the earth,'

at others it presented very different scenes; it carried Queens to coronation, it carried them also to the scaffold, as we have already seen in the case of Anne Boleyn. In almost every reign of the earlier Kings, and of the Tudor and Stuart dynasties, victims of despotism were carried from the Tower to Westminster for trial, and taken back to the grim fortress with the axe turned towards their faces; but the solid citizens looked on such occurrences with as much unconcern as the swans who then floated about the river almost as numerous as their fellows the human geese, who thought no more of hangings, beheadings, and burnings than they did of wiping their mouths with the tablecloth—when they had one. They rejoiced at such exhibitions, forgetting that in such a scene

‘ . . . Some day

Each might himself the victim play.’

An unfounded charge of witchcraft, brought by some secret enemy, might in those days send a man to the stake. The people of that time could build palaces and weave cloth of gold, but of mental refinement they knew nothing; they could calmly sit and listen to Shakespeare’s historical plays and comedies, but what stirred them were the spectacles they could behold in the buildings we see on that part of the river called Bankside. There stood in the days of which we are speaking the bull and the bear-baiting theatres, patronized, not by the scum of society, but by the Court, the aristocracy, and consequently by all who thought themselves, or wished to be thought, porcelain and not coarse pottery. Did not Queen Elizabeth—true, she was a virago, a horse-marine in petticoats—



take the French Ambassador to the bull-baiting as to an entertainment fit to be appreciated by a gentleman?

Let us turn away from this historical scavengering and seek the river again. The Thames watermen in those days were a large and powerful body, but evil days were in store for them through what happened on land: coaches came into fashion. John Taylor, himself a simple waterman, but at the same time a poet, and a poet of no mean powers, as witness, for instance, his quatrain in answer to a remark by William Fennor, 'the King's rhyming poet':

'Thou say'st that poetry descended is  
From poverty: thou tak'st thy mark amiss.  
In spite of weal or woe, or want of pelf,  
*It is a kingdom of content itself.*

Well, this John Taylor wrote much indignant satire against coaches. 'I do not inveigh,' he says in a prose pamphlet, 'against any coaches that belong to persons of worth and quality, but only against the caterpillar swarm of hirelings. They have undone my poor trade; and though I look for no reformation, yet I expect the benefit of an old proverb, "Give the losers leave to speak." . . . Every Gill Turntripe, Mistress Fumkins, Madame Polecat, and my Lady Trash; Troth the tapster; Bill the tailor; Lavender the broker; Whiff the tobacco-seller, with their companion trugs, must be coached to St. Alban's, Hockley-in-the-Hole, and many other places.' Well done, brave old John Taylor! There is plenty of rough vigour in thy fierce denunciations, and we love a man who is not afraid to speak out.

The increased traffic in the streets, which roused the

indignation of the watermen, rendered necessary more easy communication between the two banks than one single bridge could afford; hence the erection of Westminster Bridge. But this, again, though much to the public benefit, injured the private interests of the watermen, and of the men who worked the ferry between Millbank and the Archbishop's palace on the opposite shore; and even the City magnates, moved by a feeling of jealousy, opposed the scheme. Nevertheless, it was carried out, and the bridge was opened in 1750, and was considered one of the finest in the world. It was built by Labeyle, a Swiss; the piers, instead of being filled in, as was practised with other bridges, with chalk, small stones, and rubbish, were composed of solid blocks of Portland stone throughout, carefully wrought for uniting, and every arch so constructed as to stand by itself, without affecting or being affected by any other. The parapet on each side was surmounted by an open balustrade, and between each arch was a semi-octagonal recess or turret, affording a covered shelter to foot-passengers, and possessing a quality similar to that of the Whispering Gallery at St. Paul's, since what was spoken in a recess on one side could distinctly be heard, above the din of horses and carriages on the bridge, in the recess opposite. But the foundations of some of the piers gave way, especially after the demolition of old London Bridge had increased the rapidity and volume of the river, and the bridge had to be removed and replaced by one thrice the width of the original one; it was opened to the public in 1862.

James II., when he made his first attempt at flight, seeing that his subjects were thoroughly tired of him,

crossed the river from Westminster to Lambeth, and in the childish hope that the loss of it would confuse and render null and void all the plans of the new Government, he threw the Great Seal, which he had managed to secure, into the river. But it was shortly after fished up by a waterman and restored to the authorities, so that the question whether its disappearance would have been so fatal as the King supposed was never tested. But it seems that the King who could take such precautions to lose a mere metal seal was not over-particular in endeavouring to save his own wife and son. Historians pleasantly tell us that when James had resolved on flight, he sent his wife and son to France, and when he knew of their safety, he left his palace, under cover of darkness, etc. But considering the means adopted for the Queen's departure, the King scarcely had any right to expect to hear of her safe arrival in France. Mary of Modena, with her infant son in her arms, had to cross the Thames from the Horseferry Road to Lambeth, on a wet and dreary night in December, 1688, in a small boat, and on arriving at the opposite bank to take shelter under Lambeth Church tower in a pouring rain and howling wind, till the companions of her flight could find a coach to convey her safely to Gravesend. The preparations for the flight of this Queen and of her son, whom his father still considered as the legitimate heir to the throne of England, must have been made in a very perfunctory manner. The King's selfishness and meanness glare out on this occasion as they did from every action of his life.

When Westminster Bridge was built, the land on the Surrey side still consisted mostly of fields and gardens ;

from the site of the present Blackfriars Road to Lambeth Palace there were along the river but few houses, and these were of the poorer sort. There were Belvedere House and gardens near Westminster, a place of amusement in Queen Anne's time, but vanished and forgotten when the bridge was built; the only memory of it remains in Belvedere Road, originally called Narrow Wall. There were osier beds on the river, and on the south-west side of Westminster Bridge Road a row of wretched wharves, cottages, and sheds, known as Stangate—which at last acquired a very bad reputation—extended as far as a poor street called Bishop's Walk, which ran alongside the grounds of the bishop's palace. Stangate and its poor tenements disappeared when St. Thomas's Hospital was erected on the spot, and Bishop's Walk was absorbed by the Albert Embankment. Across the fields there were private toll-paths, regulated by halfpenny hatches; one of these led from Christ Church, Blackfriars Road, to the Marsh Gate, and up to Astley's Theatre. Close to the eastern end of Westminster Bridge is the Pedlar's Acre; the tradition concerning it is well known, as also was the window showing the pedlar and his dog formerly in Lambeth Church, but removed in 1884, in spite of public protests, to make room for the effigies of two ladies. As the land, now producing more than £1,000 per annum, was left to the parish on condition of the window remaining for ever, is not the gift forfeited by its removal?

The Horseferry Road at Millbank takes its name from the ferry which carried passengers and vehicles across from Millbank to Lambeth. It was one of the

most frequented passages over the river, and of considerable value to the Archbishops of Canterbury, who were the owners of it. Wherefore, when the erection of Westminster Bridge practically abolished the ferry, the sum of £2,200 was paid in compensation to His Grace. Still, it was occasionally used till the building of Lambeth Bridge in 1862, which is a wire suspension bridge. As early as the year 1825 Charles Hollis, an architect, proposed the erection on the spot of an iron bridge with seven arches. The passage by ferry was always a dangerous one, and people were often detained at the hostelry for days on account of the tempestuous state of the weather and river. On the Millbank side there was a wooden house for a small guard, placed there at the time of the Commonwealth, which still stood there early in this century. Before the construction of the Albert Embankment, the landing-place on the Lambeth side, with the small old-fashioned houses surrounding it, wore a very picturesque aspect. Regattas in which the Horseferry and Vauxhall watermen competed for wherries and various sums of money were held as late as the year 1840. Having mentioned a regatta, we must not omit speaking of the most important one on the river, which still takes place annually on August 1. It was founded by Thomas Doggett, a comedian, in 1715, to celebrate the accession of the House of Hanover to the English throne. Six young watermen, just out of their apprenticeship, row for Doggett's coat and badge from the Old Swan at London Bridge to the Swan—or, that being gone, to the Cadogan Pier—at Chelsea. Besides the coat and badge, there are various money prizes. It was rowed

in 1898 under very difficult conditions, as a strong breeze met the flood tide, and the water was very rough throughout the whole length of the course—four and a half miles. The race was won by a Greenwich waterman.

A description of Lambeth Palace, which stands here, is beyond our scope; it forms a noble background to the river, and is a highly interesting historical building. Till within the last few years some dilapidated but picturesque buildings faced the entrance gate of the palace; one of them, called the Meeting House, was said to have been a house in which John Bunyan occasionally preached.\* The land on the Middlesex side opposite up to Vauxhall Bridge, which we speak of at length in a previous chapter, and far beyond it, was till early in this century a mere swamp, offering from the river no aspect but one of utter desolation. The last house at Millbank, and the last dwelling in Westminster, was the Earl of Peterborough's, which had a large courtyard in front and a fine garden behind it, but the situation was unhealthy through the marshy land all around. It was, says Pennant, probably built by the first Earl of Peterborough, and came to the Grosvenor family by purchase. They took down the original building in 1809, and rebuilt it in its present form. The houses on the Surrey side are all excessively mean, and the locality will be still more unattractive when the large potteries with their everlasting smoke

\* Bunyan's pulpit stood for many years in the Meeting House. What became of it? Was it broken up, like De Foe's at Tooting? or sold, like the old pulpit of Lambeth Church, in 1851, for 8d.?



come to be set up there. But at Vauxhall the view is improved: two fine buildings present themselves, Marble Hall and the Manor House, or Copt Hall. On the Middlesex side—a dismal swamp, as we mentioned above—there shall be erected a fortress-like building, Millbank Prison, which, though built at an enormous expense, hundreds of thousands of pounds being spent in merely preparing the ground for and laying the foundations, shall have but a short existence; built *circa* 1810, it shall totally disappear in 1893.

But here we are at Vauxhall, where there is a ferry across the river, but it is not a very lively one, there being as yet but a scanty population on either bank. It is only on Vauxhall Gardens nights that the locality wakes up. Then pleasure barges full of gay company come up to Vauxhall Stairs, and the visitors fill the quiet streets with revelry and dissipation. But has not all this been described in hundreds of books, pamphlets, broadsides, songs, and reports? We only allude to those doings because the river was the highway, the chief road to them, till Vauxhall Bridge came into existence. And as we, at the time we are supposed to be going up the river, can see that bridge by anticipation only, so now, at the time we are writing, we can see it only by retrospection, for its short life is ended; opened to the public in 1816, it was closed to it, and its demolition commenced, in 1898. Here we pass Cumberland Gardens, a pleasant place of amusement on a summer's day; their site shall eventually be covered with black, grimy gasworks. It is depressing to see what havoc the exigencies of industrial pursuits play with all the lovely spots on the Thames. We remember in our

younger days visiting some lovely gardens, with a picturesque tavern attached thereto, at Erith. A few years ago we had a fancy to pay them a fresh visit, but on arriving at the spot we found the pleasant tavern turned into counting-houses, and the gardens into an immense coal-yard, not a vestige of turf or flower remaining. Vauxhall Gardens, and all the nursery grounds, the 'grapery' which once surrounded them, are gone to make room for factories and railway stations; we go up the river but a little way, and come to Nine Elms. Whence the name? From a cluster of fine elms which once stood on the spot, ruthlessly cut down to make room for some workshops early in this century.

There were seven elms planted in a circle, with a walnut-tree in the centre, in the north of London, at Tottenham—and splendid trees they were. Where are they now? Are they still standing?

From Nine Elms upwards we are quite in the country: on the Middlesex side we have Neate House Gardens, eventually to be covered with fine houses and noble mansions, yielding a princely revenue to their fortunate owner. On the Surrey side are Battersea Fields—a dreary, unbroken wilderness of some 300 acres, the resort of roughs, gipsies, and duellists, which latter seem to have frequented the locality at an early date, for in Vincent Bourne's (born 1696, died 1747) Latin poem, '*Iter per Tamesin*,' it is mentioned as 'a spot of ill repute for sanguinary duels.' The most noteworthy duel which took place on this spot was that between the Duke of Wellington and the Earl of Winchilsea, which, however, ended without injury to either. Lord

Winchilsea, after escaping the Duke's shot, fired in the air, and then apologized. Close on the river stands the Red House, a tavern, which for many years had a windmill in front of it. It afterwards became famous, or infamous, for the cruel sport of pigeon-shooting. Now 185 acres of the site are comprised in Battersea Park, which is one of the handsomest parks in London. Opposite to this spot stood the famous Ranelagh, with its short-lived glories; our wretched climate will never allow an outdoor place of amusement to flourish. A more interesting establishment is the Botanical Garden, which was founded in 1673 by the Company of Apothecaries for the cultivation of medicinal plants. When first formed, it was entirely in the country; by-and-by it will be entirely hemmed in by houses, and open only towards the river, which must seriously interfere with the growth and health of the plants, and will eventually necessitate its removal to purer air.

And now we have come to the counterpart of the establishment from which we started, Greenwich Hospital, till recently the asylum of disabled seamen. On our right is Chelsea Hospital, the asylum of invalid soldiers. Tradition says that Nell Gwynn suggested the idea of it to Charles II., after a wounded and destitute soldier had asked alms of her, and that he took kindly to it. At all events, he founded the hospital, and laid the first stone, and the building was finished in 1690, at the cost of £150,000. The river front of the hospital is so well known that it needs no description; with the internal economy of the institution we are not concerned, as the building interests us only relatively to the Thames. We therefore pass on

to one of the most picturesque bits of river scenery in London, namely, Cheyne Walk, which fortunately has not been spoilt by the Embankment. It was a charming spot in the days of old, the delight of artists and lovers of Nature; and if the beauty of the spot has been detracted from, it is by the removal of old Battersea Bridge, so beloved by painters and dreaded by inexperienced rowers. As usual, wherever a bridge is built, it was preceded by a ferry. Such was the case here; the ferry belonged to Thomas, Earl of Lincoln, who in 1618 sold it to William Blake, who was a landowner at Chelsea, owning, among other properties, Chelsea Park, which had once belonged to Sir Thomas More. How the ferry changed hands is not exactly known, but in 1695 it was the property of Bartholomew Nutt. It afterwards came into the possession of Sir Walter St. John, who owned the manor of Battersea, and passed with the Bolingbroke estate to Earl Spencer, under whom it was held till the bridge was built. In 1766 an Act of Parliament was obtained for building a bridge over the Thames at the ferry, but there was some delay in commencing the work, which was done in 1771, in which year also the bridge was opened for foot-passengers, and in the following year it was ready for carriages. It was 726 feet long and 24 feet wide, constructed entirely of wood, with nineteen openings; in 1799 one side of the bridge was lighted with oil lamps, which were replaced by gas in 1824. The cost of this bridge, borne by a number of gentlemen, associated in the enterprise with Lord Spenser, was, comprising the approaches, £22,000. The contractors were Messrs. Holland and Phillips;

the design of the bridge is attributed to Cheselden, the great surgeon, who is buried in the neighbouring graveyard of Chelsea Hospital. For the six years preceding the building of the bridge the ferry had produced an average rental of £42 per annum. The tolls authorized to be taken at the bridge were one-third lower than those charged at any other bridge, viz., a carriage and four horses, 1s.; a carriage and pair, 8d.; a carriage with one horse, 4d.; a cart with three or four horses, 1s.; a cart with two horses, 6d.; a horse, 1d.; a foot-passenger,  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. For some years the proprietors did not get ordinary interest for their money, though the dividends improved when buildings on both sides of the bridge increased, and it remained in the hands of the descendants of the original builders till 1873, when it came into possession of the Albert Bridge Company. It was eventually condemned, pulled down, and a new bridge of iron girders on granite piers was opened to the public in 1890.

Chelsea Reach is almost two miles in length, and wider than any part of the river, and also, or consequently, more subject to wavy roughness than is any other reach west of London Bridge. In fact, the river here, with the 'Village of Palaces,' as Chelsea has been called, on the one side, some picturesque buildings on the Battersea bank—especially the curious horizontal windmill described in our chapter entitled Windmills—and a church on either side, together with its wide expanse, the delightful bit of bridge-building curiosity (we, of course, have the old wooden bridge in our mind's eye) in front, and the once thoroughly countrified vista beyond—with all these attractions, the Thames here

assumes one of its most charming aspects. Having passed through all the noise, tumult, and bewildering activity of the Pool and the City, and through the dreariness of Lambeth, we seem here to enter an enchanted lake, bordered by fanciful palaces, and crossed by a fairy-like bridge—a perfect haven of rest. Here we land, having seen the river at its best, and well deserving the praise bestowed on it in the poem entitled ‘An Honour to London,’ preserved among the Lansdowne MSS. in the British Museum, and, according to the handwriting and spelling, composed in the time of Henry VII. There are seven stanzas of eight lines each, and the stanza, with two additional lines from the next, especially referring to the river Thames is as follows :

‘Above all Rivers thy River hath renowne,  
 Whose boriall stremys plesaunt and preclare  
 Under thy lusty wallys renneth a downe,  
 Where many a swan swymeth w<sup>h</sup> wynges fore,  
 Where many a barge doth rowe and sayle w<sup>h</sup> ore,  
 Where many a ship resteth w<sup>h</sup> top royall.  
 O towne of townys patron, and not compare,  
 London, thowe arte the flowre of cities all.  
 ‘Upon thy lusty bridge w<sup>h</sup> pillers white  
 Been marchauntis full royall to be holde.’

But the Present surpasses the splendour of the Past, over which the poet grew so enthusiastic. The ‘lusty bridge with pillars white’ is gone, but in its stead another one has arisen, which, though not presenting that marvellous *coup d’œil* afforded by its predecessor, is yet a model of elegance, solidity, and convenience; while, instead of one bridge we now have in the distance



traversed by us in the preceding pages no fewer than eleven bridges (including the new Vauxhall Bridge now building), which by their number and beauty convey an impressive idea of the growth of our London and of its inexhaustible wealth, for these bridges involved an outlay of many millions of pounds, supplied by the public, whilst four railway bridges and three tunnels testify to the magnitude of private enterprise. And all these structures impart to the Thames, in its flow through the Metropolis, an aspect of national power which is not equalled, much less surpassed, in any other country in the world. And, truly, the monumental Tower Bridge forms a noble portal to the daring but graceful arches that span, and the cyclopean granite walls which enclose, the grand and historic waterway of the Thames.



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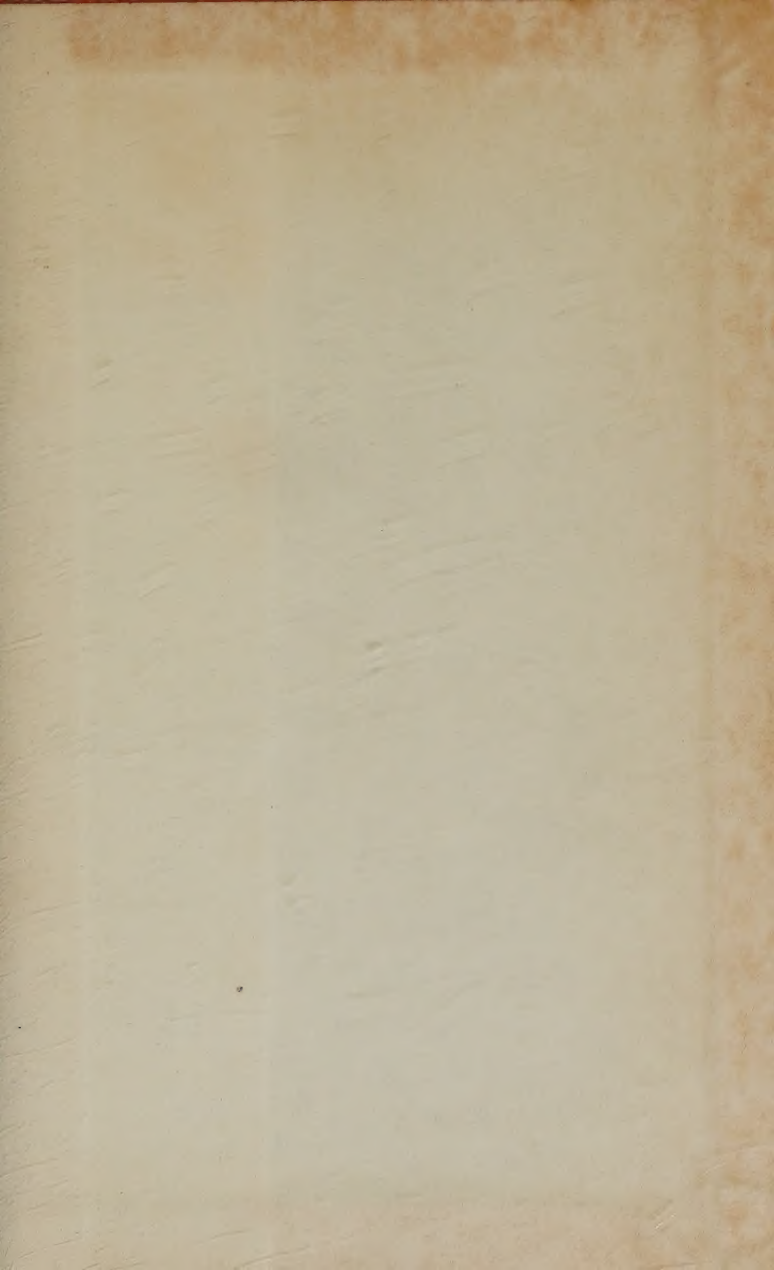






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